

Protect & Build SNAP & Medicaid

The Story Bank

March 2025

Community Change Action has collected more than 500 stories of people and families nationwide who need Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), school meals and SNAP to buy groceries, and cover their medications, see a doctor, get life-saving care and so much more.

Alabama

Valencia's Story

"I am a retired teacher who worked in a low-income area for about thirty years. I saw firsthand how EBT helped my students. Many of them would not have been able to eat without them--at home as well as school. These students were able to receive free food at school. Many of them had only those meals. Their breakfast and lunch. The summer meal program was a lifesaver for many moms. Their children were able to eat a hot meal at the schools. Sometimes, these children were very hungry.

"Over the weekend some only had one meal a day. It is very important that these children, as well as the older seniors, get the food they need. I am a little more blessed than some, I am able to eat what I want most of the time. Thank God for the blessing. I also look at what happened to myself and my husband. We both had cancer last year at the same time. We were both able to get the necessary help that we needed. He was in remission for a while it came back. He is now taking treatment again. Everyone should be able to afford great health care in the U.S.A."

Indiana

Karen and Will's Story

"Medicaid, Medicare and the ACA have helped us or family many times! Planned Parenthood too. We need a social safety net. **We deserve a dignified retirement.** All our surplus income goes to car repairs and vet bills."

Vanessa's Story

"My husband suffered a traumatic brain injury. As a result, he has post-traumatic epilepsy. It has been difficult. **Once he finally got approved for Medicaid, I was able to not cherry-pick what bills I had to pay.** I believe that universal healthcare would benefit everyone. That way, people could afford food, rent, heat and, electric. People wouldn't have to worry so much. Therefore, life would be simpler."

Indiana (continued)

Beverly's Story

"My husband has heart trouble, breathing problems, & sometimes walking problems. I have trouble walking because of a replaced hip & knee, plus two shoulder replacements. **My husband has Medicaid and I do not. This means he gets a home health aid and I have none.** I do my own personal care. We get meals for both of us, but I have a lot of high-priced meds & it is very difficult to pay for them. **We just refused one of my new meds because we can't afford \$600 a month for my drug, even though it was helping me.** I had to stop a new med I was on because I don't make enough to pay for it on top of all my other bills (insurance, drugs, etc). Having universal access to food and healthcare would make life so much easier for everyone."

William's Story

"I'm a liver transplant patient, and **if it weren't for these programs I wouldn't be alive now,** because the meds I have to take are so expensive that I couldn't afford to pay for them and after I got sick. I took everything I had just to survive and pay for everything needed even before my transplant and my wife was sick before that with heart disease and a four-way bypass so I was actually saved and survive now because of these programs."

Idaho

Anita's Story

"I have historically been the family breadwinner. Now I am retired and collect Social Security and receive Medicare. My husband worked in real estate, but did not establish retirement plans as he was not making enough to do so. His disabilities have prevented him from getting a job. **Consequently, he has not had access to health insurance, at least until he found out he was eligible for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act.** The subsidy he receives toward his monthly health care insurance is about \$800 a month. Without the subsidy, we would not be able to afford his health insurance. He has several pre-existing conditions, which, if ACA is not funded and its rules removed, would mean he is uninsurable. We have ten more years of mortgage payments to make.

"If ACA disappears, we would be forced into making devastating decisions with extremely challenging and threatening consequences. ACA has been a lifesaver. Don't toss it out the window. Without ACA, we would probably be forced to sell our home and then try to find an affordable rental, which would be difficult.

"In our area, rents are as expensive as most house payments. We are already financially stressed by my Medicare-related expenses. A sizable amount of money is taken out of my Social Security check each month to cover the Medicare insurance premiums. Under Medicare, there is a \$200+ charge against my monthly Social Security check to help pay for the first \$200 in medical charges for the year. We don't have much discretionary money to spend going out with friends, traveling to visit family members, or to take vacations. Sometimes it feels difficult to remain connected to others."

Louisiana

Tabitha's Story

"I have several health issues and am currently unable to work. **Medicaid has been essential in managing my conditions, and without the SNAP program, I wouldn't be able to buy groceries at all.**"

"If these programs were cut, it would be devastating—not just for me, but for millions of others who rely on them. I have been a taxpayer my entire adult life until I became disabled a few years ago. Now, these benefits serve as lifelines for me, helping me survive when I have no other options. Without them, I would be in a very bad place. If everyone had universal access to food and healthcare, it would change lives. Losing these resources would be extremely difficult for my family and would take a heavy toll on my mental health. The stress of not knowing how to afford basic necessities would make everything even more challenging. I just hope that those in power consider the real impact of these programs before making harmful cuts."

Tribble's Story

"I have a 14 year old grandson who depends on Medicaid. He has ADHD and takes medication for it, and has to see the doctor every three months to get his medication, so without having Medicaid, he wouldn't be able to see the doctor.

"Many times I have had to make a difficult decision regarding paying for food, bottled water, or deciding to pay my home owners insurance. The system is set up for failure. The Louisiana legislature refuses to pass a law to raise minimum wage, so we now have single parent households working two jobs, which now causes the kids to be left home alone or raised by siblings. If they would raise the minimum wage, parents would not have to work two jobs and would be home when the kids are out of school."

Thomas' Story

"As long as I have had my Louisiana Purchase card [SNAP], **it has served me very well, especially in my retirement.**"

Tamra's Story

"I have depression and PTSD. I'm unable to work and rely on Medicaid to get my monthly medications to keep me essentially alive. **SNAP cuts would take away food each month.**"

Raydon's Story

"I rely on Medicaid a lot as do other people in my life. If it were to be cut I know our health would decline. Instead of trying to get rid of Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act why not try improving it along with other programs such as SNAP/EBT. Universal health care would change things for the better for so many people."

Tiersa's Story

"Me and my mother have benefited a great deal from food stamps and Medicaid. Both of us have medical conditions and we also survive on food stamps. **Without these lifelines, it would be a disaster.**"

North Carolina

Jennifer's Story

"I am the parent of a 42-year-old son who has cerebral palsy, an intellectual disability, autism, and bipolar disorder. Thanks to a Medicaid waiver program, he can live in the community instead of being placed in an institution. His complex needs are met, and he is happy, well cared for, and close to his family. This level of care would be impossible without Medicaid."

Lydia's Story

"After being on Social Security Disability, I received Medicare, Medicaid and food stamps. If it wasn't for these programs, I would not be able to afford my prescriptions, I take around 10 a day. **Additionally, I was recently diagnosed with lung cancer, and would not have been able to afford the life saving care and surgery, if it weren't for Medicare and Medicaid.**

Thanks to these programs, I have also been able to access all of the diagnostic tests, appointments with cardiologist, and neurologists atrial fibrillation (AF) and major cluster headaches. The food stamps ensure that I can get the healthier food, I would not otherwise be able to get. These programs are very important to me."

Pami's Story

"As a disabled American, I depend on Medicare and Medicaid to help with medical cost and medication that I would otherwise never be able to afford. My life depends on these programs. My medication costs way more than I bring in. If I had to pay for it, there would be no money for anything else."

Amanda's Story

"I am a cancer survivor. It was diagnosed in Feb. 2023. Thanks to Medicaid, I was able to treat my cancer - I had chemo and immunotherapy infusions. Due to my illness, I had to stop working and just began working again in November 2024, but only part-time. I am extremely grateful to be alive.

"Yet without the financial support of Medicaid, SNAP, and the small amount of savings I have, I do not know how I will survive. Cancer can happen to anyone and it can change your life in a minute. These programs are vital for the health and safety of Americans."

Jacqueline's Story

"Medicaid and food and nutritional services helped me when I had to take a leave of absence from my job to take care of my sick child. I lost all my benefits and my household income. They helped me to continue to have my child receive medical services and for her long stay in the hospital.

"I don't know what I would have done without state assistance and they kept food on the table when mentally I was not able to do so without income. I appreciate all that the state did for me and I would hate to see it be removed because you never know what someone is going through.

Cheryl's Story

"I am 69 years old and have been on oxygen for the past 21 years. If not for Medicaid, I would have been dead years ago, and it also pays for my Medicare premium."

North Carolina (continued)

Sarah's Story

“I have a 4 year old son who is disabled and on Medicaid, without it he would not be able to get the necessary care and therapies he needs to grow and develop. The therapies he receives gives him an equal opportunity to be on the same playing field as his peers. They are helping him through his speech delays, so when he goes to kindergarten, he'll be developmentally ready and have the highest chance at success.”

Tamalee's Story

“I am the primary care provider for my special needs son and because of that, I am unable to work. **We depend on Medicaid and SNAP to get us through month to month.**”

Sandra's Story

“I am very grateful for the Affordable Care Act. I worked as an independent contractor and needed insurance for my son. Through the Health Marketplace, I was able to find a good insurance that covered his existing condition, his main doctor was in network and the types of medicines he takes are covered.

“I believe that due to having the Affordable Care Act I was able to find a good insurance at a good price. If there was no Act, I would probably have to get another job just to pay his insurance, and who knows what it would cover.”

Oklahoma

Titania's Story

“[SNAP and Medicaid] have been a lifesaver for me and my family, and we're truly grateful for them. It's a blessing that has helped us out in countless ways, and we're not alone - many American families rely on these benefits to get by. I'm talking about low-income families, middle-class working families, and marginalized communities who are already vulnerable. That's why I'm spreading the word to all American families and citizens: we need to stand together and **protect these essential benefits that so many of us depend on.**”

Tennessee

Chris's Story

“Having Medicaid is the only reason I've been able to access healthcare, avoid medical debt, kept me alive and not put my family in crisis.

“Without it, I'm done. I can't afford my regular medication that costs upwards of \$2000 a month and that's not including doctor visits. Benefits like Medicaid are things that are a basic human right. **A healthy society requires healthy, fed and education people. It would relieve some of the most basic stressors.**”

Texas

Tori's Story

“Food stamps have been a lifeline for my family, helping us manage the rising cost of food. **Medicaid has been just as crucial**, saving my grandparents from the stress of medical debt by allowing them to receive the care they need. Every month, I face tough financial choices. I earn just enough to cover rent, utilities, and car insurance, but without food stamps, we wouldn't be able to eat daily—literally. If everyone had universal access to food and healthcare, it would change lives. The less we have to stress about survival, the healthier we become as individuals, families, and communities. For my family, it would mean stability, security, and a chance to truly live instead of just getting by.”

Sharon's Story

“I personally benefited from the Affordable Care Act, and my family did, too. I especially appreciated that my son was allowed to remain on our insurance until he was 26. **At one point, I had to use the SNAP and WIC programs for my son. These programs are extremely important for the working poor.** I have faced the decision to either put food on the table or pay a bill. It's a right for everyone to have food and access to medical care.”

Bryce's Story

“I work in long-term care, **where 80% of our residents rely on Medicaid.** If that funding is cut, they will have nowhere to live, and I will lose my job.”

Tammy's Story

“My son was hit by a car two days after Christmas in 2020. He was one semester shy of graduating from the University of Texas. He suffered a traumatic brain injury that stole his speech, his ability to eat and his ability to walk. He needs a feeding tube today. The police still have not found the person that took my son's life from him. **Medicaid has allowed my son much needed physical therapy, speech and occupational therapy as well as provide his nutrition since he is no longer able to eat solid foods.** I don't think Trump or Republicans care about mine or anyone else's children.”

Utah

Phyllis' Story

“I'm disabled and had to retire early, so I'm always on a budget. I need several medications for bipolar disorder, ADHD, learning disabilities, and severe arthritis pain from 12 orthopedic surgeries, as well as treatment for breast cancer. **Every month, it's a struggle to pay my bills.** I also need to see a counselor once a month to stay balanced, and at 75, I have to pay people to help with things I can no longer do myself.”

Wisconsin

Phillip's Story

“Medicaid allows me to live in the community and not in a nursing home. I live independently with support coming in as needed. I love my independence and will lose that independence if Medicaid is cut.”

Sonna's Story

“I only work a few days a month. My family and I are on badger care and we cannot lose it. **There is no way I could afford insurance.**”

Vickie's Story

“We have to pay for 20 prescriptions a month. **It's hard to pay rent, utilities, and food.**”

Janet and Wayne's Story

“Our son who is 37 and disabled receives food stamps, rent assistance. With these programs being cut, **we don't know how he will make it.**”

Suzanne's Story

“I'm still struggling to afford food because prices keep going up. FoodShare needs to increase again, people can't keep up with the rising costs.”

Anna's Story

Without the help from these benefits I would not be able to afford my medication. Yes I have had to make difficult choices when I was between a rock and a hard place.

Marlo's Story

“Prior to ACA (Affordable Care Act), I couldn't get good health insurance due to having high cholesterol diagnosis but since the ACA, I've been able to get excellent health insurance. I also have more serious diagnoses that would've disqualify me. Additionally, I've able to get necessary medical equipment that I otherwise wouldn't been able to get.”

Jamie's Story

“As a person on disability I rely on the extra from food stamps and Medicaid just to barely get by in life. **If these are taken away millions of lives will be shattered and that's scary!** Having benefits made it so I could afford my rent and without those I fear I would become homeless and I don't even have a car to live in now that I have become ill from having a stroke and cannot drive because of it.”

Martha's Story

“My husband would be dead if not for Badger Care - he had emergency surgery to save him from a serious intestinal infection and spent 11 days in the hospital. As small business owners, we have been able to establish our brand by benefiting from FoodShare and Badger Care in the early years when money was very scarce. If there were more benefits people could focus on their families, neighborhoods, and communities because their daily struggles to feed and care for themselves are being met.”

Wisconsin (continued)

Marjorie's Story

"I am a 72 year old woman who receives \$950 a month to help me. Without Medicaid, I wouldn't be able to afford the medical care because of my low income, I have many medical issues including a rare brain disorder. **All my money goes to bills, so the food support I receive is essential so I can afford groceries.**"

Tammy's Story

"Without Medicaid and Medicare, we probably wouldn't survive—we rely on these services to live. Even with food assistance, it's still difficult to keep enough food in the house, and without it, we would go hungry most of the time.

"There have been moments where we've had to choose between necessities, but if we had to pay out of pocket for our medications, we simply wouldn't make it. Having universal access to food and healthcare would change everything. It would ease our struggles and help our family immensely, allowing us to focus on living rather than just surviving."

Jane's Story

"My sister lost her job unexpectedly in 2022 at the age of 62. With only her \$13,000-a-year pension to rely on, she chose Common Ground insurance until she became eligible for Medicare.

"Then, in 2024, she was diagnosed with three different types of cancer. The costs were overwhelming—by the end of the year, she had paid \$9,450 in prepaid co-pays just to receive treatment. On December 15, she was hospitalized with multiple complications. I helped her apply for BadgerCare, and thankfully, she was accepted as of January 1, 2025. **Without it, she would have had to spend her entire life savings to afford care.** Now, she's been in the hospital for nine weeks and counting. I am incredibly grateful for BadgerCare—it has truly been a lifesaver. Access to food and healthcare isn't just about convenience; for many innocent people, it's the difference between life and death. **No one should have to go through what my sister did just to get the care they need.**"

Wisconsin (continued)

Diana's Story

“Without food support, I would have to choose between medications for my autoimmune disease and food. I'm on the poverty line already and I have a hard time getting thru the month on the little social security and small pension. Living on the poverty line isn't easy and it's nerve-wracking. You always worry that the car is going to die and need a repair, or that I'm going to get sicker because my autoimmune disease makes me more susceptible to infection. I'm already on a number of medications for more chronic conditions of a hard working life.

Kim's Story

“Without Medicaid, I wouldn't be able to afford the medication I need to stay alive—they are truly a godsend. If everyone had universal access to food and healthcare, it would make a huge difference in how people live, work, and interact. For my family, it would mean they wouldn't have to spend two weeks' worth of pay just to cover basic preventative care. It would ease the financial burden and give us peace of mind, knowing that staying healthy wouldn't come at such a high cost.”

West Virginia

Angela's Story

“I have been on disability so I need health care because I have a lot of health issues and I need help with food because of it being so high.”