



35TH DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 30014
LANSING, MI 48909-7514

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JENNIFER WORTZ
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PHONE: (517) 373-1788
FAX: (517) 373-5880
JenniferWortz@house.mi.gov

Statement from State Rep. Jennifer Wortz on the “One Big Beautiful Bill”

I attended a meeting last week on how to improve birth outcomes in Hillsdale County. The issue was raised about the number of women who give birth on Medicaid in the state, especially in Hillsdale County. There have been many concerns raised about the “One Big Beautiful Bill” that was passed by congress, and what it could mean locally and for the state of Michigan. I have been in conversations with our local hospitals and with my colleagues at the state level in how we can help continue to provide rural healthcare funding. Below, I’ve put together some of the details about the bill’s changes to Medicaid, their impact on my district, and some things I think we can continue to work on.

I don’t think this bill is perfect, but something had to be done to address the growing number of individuals on Medicaid. It is not sustainable. I think we all can agree healthcare in America needs an overhaul. I hope this is a step in that direction, making our system more affordable, reasonable, and transparent. I also hope it is a path towards helping people find work and a career that can provide for themselves and their family. That should be our goal for all citizens.

One of the biggest concerns I’ve heard is in reporting. The bill adds work and reporting requirements for able-bodied adults who qualify for Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act expansion. The key is going to be making the reporting accessible and simple. People who are able to work and still want access to the expansion of Medicaid should be able to work part-time and get themselves on the path to self-sufficiency. The new requirements are common sense, and possible to achieve. The requirement includes activities like volunteering, attending classes, participating in job training, or working for 80 hours a month, or 20 hours per week. Parents of young children, seniors, individuals who are medically frail, and individuals with disabilities are exempt from this requirement, so they will continue to receive the care they need.

Because Michigan signed on for Medicaid expansion in 2014, we will be faced with a deficit in federal funding covering the additional participants who signed up. This expansion, part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), extended Medicaid coverage to adults with incomes up to 138% of the Federal Poverty Level. The state of Michigan will have to decide how to continue to fund the expansion program or drop coverage back to the federal guidelines. This becomes an issue in rural areas where patients are largely expansion coverage.



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Those that fail to meet the reporting requirements or threshold for need-based care will then become uninsured. Rural hospitals cannot foot the bill for uninsured patients and continue to stay in business. Recognizing that rural communities could be disproportionately impacted, the bill does include some dedicated funding to support rural hospitals. I'm continuing to look at ways we can help support rural healthcare at the state level as well.

My goal is to ensure that benefits are protected for the vulnerable in our state and the 35th district — pregnant women, children, people with disabilities, and low-income seniors — so that they can continue to access the care they need. I remain committed to supporting a healthcare system that is both sustainable and compassionate, and I will continue to do what I can to strengthen Medicaid for those who truly need it.

If my staff or I can be of further assistance, please call 517-373-1788 or email my office at jenniferwortz@house.mi.gov.

Sincerely,

State Representative Jennifer Wortz

Michigan's 35th House District