
VIEWPOINTS

LETTER | Don't balance budget on backs of South Dakotans with disabilities

Letter to the editor by Cole Uecker, executive director of Disability Rights South Dakota

MAY 10, 2025

[Online Link](#)



Disability Rights South Dakota is deeply concerned that Congress may cut Medicaid funding in its budget package. Medicaid is more than health insurance; it is a lifeline for South Dakotans. With more than 128,000 South Dakotans relying on the program to live full, independent and healthy lives, protecting access to adequate and affordable healthcare has never been more important. The program covers one in 13 adults, two in 7 children, and half of all nursing home residents in our state. Cutting Medicaid would directly or indirectly affect nearly every South Dakotan.

Living with any disability often requires costly treatments, in-home care, prescription medication, and much more. Without health coverage, individuals with disabilities would face insurmountable obstacles, including skyrocketing their medical budgets, reducing their access to critical services, the inability to work independently and overall worse health outcomes. People deserve to live with dignity and independence, not be forced between paying medical bills or putting food on the table.

We encourage Sen. Thune, Sen. Rounds, and Rep. Johnson to have conversations with South Dakotans and learn more about how access to Medicaid health insurance helps the people in our communities live full lives.

Cole Uecker

Executive Director, Disability Rights South Dakota