

We are Medicaid: Stories from South Carolinians with Disabilities and our Families, about Resilience and Independence

Gathered by Able South Carolina

Our Medicaid Stories

Able South Carolina has compiled stories from Medicaid recipients with disabilities across South Carolina. These stories represent the incredible benefit Medicaid brings to our nation: families who can continue to work thanks to respite from Medicaid; young children who can access the essential building blocks needed to develop into independent citizens; aging parents who know their disabled adult children will continue to live at home and never fear their entering a dangerous institution; people with sudden injuries and illnesses that turned their worlds upside down, who continue to thrive and as productive community members; disabled people who have fulfilled their potential thanks to the benefits of Medicaid, who now are giving back to their communities and country.

South Carolina only covers 24.6% of the cost of Medicaid. With Medicaid waiver waitlists of over 40,000 and years-long waits, South Carolina alone cannot afford to cover the cost of our state's needs. Cuts from the federal government would be devastating to our families. Without Medicaid, these stories would be about strain on the system, devastated families, and mourning and loss. Your lawmaker's vote can either put disabled folks back in the shadows of institutional halls at a greater cost to taxpayers, or allow our community to continue to thrive, live independently, and contribute to society. Please read on to hear directly from your South Carolina neighbors.

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Grace, college grad & award recipient of honors

Loves a good book, curled up on the couch with her cat

Graduated early from college in journalism

Gets support from Medicaid, allowing her to live 100% on her own, get a good job, and contribute to her community

Has Cerebral Palsy

Enjoys her life on her terms in her own apartment while holding a good job.



able
SOUTH CAROLINA

Grace Myers, a 23-year-old woman with Cerebral Palsy, is a wheelchair user living independently in Greer, SC, with her two beloved cats. A passionate cat lover, avid reader, and creative soul, Grace grew up participating in musicals and has never viewed her disability as something that holds her back. Instead, she navigates a world that often overlooks the needs of disabled individuals with determination and resilience. Despite facing judgment from those who only see her disability, Grace has fully and with joy participated in society. She graduated early from college with a journalism and public relations degree and is currently seeking a job that aligns with her long-term goals. She is deeply committed to storytelling, advocacy, and community engagement. She believes that everyone has a story worth telling.

Medicaid has been a crucial part of Grace's life since childhood. Between the ages of 8 and 14, she underwent multiple surgeries and procedures. Without Medicaid as secondary insurance, the financial burden on her family would have been overwhelming. The program provided vital financial support, ensuring Grace received medical care without devastating her family's finances.

However, the most significant impact of Medicaid came when Grace went to college and began living independently. Through Medicaid, she has access to personal care services, meal delivery, and transportation to medical appointments—benefits that are essential to her independence. Personal care attendants (PCAs) played a life-saving role during her college years while giving her access to a good and reliable support system. On several occasions, she fell out of bed in the morning, but knowing that a PCA was on the way brought security and peace of mind. Without these services, she would have had to rely on emergency responders like 911, which would have been costly, invasive, and placed an unnecessary strain on the healthcare system. Instead, Medicaid

allowed her to receive cost-effective, noninvasive, and consistent support, enabling her to live independently, live in the college dorms, contribute fully to society, attend college, and have fun like anyone else.

If Medicaid were cut, Grace would be forced to move back in with her parents to a rural area that is far less accessible. She would lose her ability to live independently, along with critical services such as personal care assistance, transportation, pain management medication, and assistive technology like her wheelchair. She would lose access to living and having her own life and own place. Losing Medicaid would not only impact her health and daily life but also increase costs for her and the broader healthcare system.

Additionally, the process of applying for and receiving Medicaid services is already complex and challenging. Individuals with disabilities must navigate numerous bureaucratic hurdles to access the care they need. Adding further requirements or restrictions would only increase stress and hardship for people who are already managing complex lives.

Medicaid is not just a safety net for Grace—it is the foundation that allows her to live independently, maintain her health, and participate fully in society.

Protecting and improving access to these services is essential for ensuring that individuals like Grace can continue to lead fulfilling and self-sufficient lives.

Candace

I am a single parent of a young woman who had a neonatal life-ending type of stroke at birth. She is also living with two brain tumors as well as epilepsy, developmental disabilities, and requires 24/7 care every day of her life. She cannot eat on her own, dress herself, or do any personal care. She relies on me and a part-time respite helper to live her daily life. Her care needs would require

institutionalization if not for Medicaid. Medicaid allows her to live at home with her family and access appropriate Healthcare, resources, and therapies so she doesn't lose the abilities she has. It allows us to care for her in the least restrictive environment, where she is safe and loved. Her needs are far more than any family could care for or supply, even with large incomes. Still, as her only family member who has stepped up to care for her and continues to care for her for life, I have been unable to maintain consistent employment because her needs for medical care, hospitalizations, and treatments take up so much time. I have no appropriate help that is able to care for her safely due to her complex needs. My daughter has fought so hard to survive the horrific circumstances that occurred in her life as a brand -new baby, and every day of her life has been a battle for her and for me as her mother. Please don't cut these vital resources to the most marginalized citizens in South Carolina and our nation.

Anonymous

As an adult with needs for Autism, incontinence, and support for my mental health, I depend on Medicaid. Medicaid supports my health, including access to my primary care provider for regular checkups and prescription medications. Medicaid and SSI are my only sources of support as a disabled adult. I have a twin brother with cognitive disabilities who will need lifetime support for his medical complications, including brain surgeries essential to keep him alive. He relies on additional support beyond what I receive. Protecting Medicaid is necessary for saving many lives and preventing issues that a lack of available medical services would cause.

I AM MEDICAID

Meet James,
USC graduate

Loves
playing
video
games and
watching
movies
with
friends.

Graduated
in the top
10 of his
high
school
class.

Has autism
& MELAS

Medicaid
allows him
to have
access to
needed
medication
and also
allows him
to receive
respite
services
and in-
home
support.

Is working
towards
holding a
good and
meaningful
job through
employment
support.



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James is a 38-year-old South Carolinian with autism and a rare genetic disability called MELAS (Mitochondrial Encephalomyopathy, Lactic Acidosis, and Stroke - like Episodes). James graduated in the top 10 from Dutch Fork High School and graduated from the University of South Carolina. He likes playing video games and watching movies with his friends. Currently, James goes to Babcock Center for employment support. Medicaid allows him to have access to needed medication and also allows him to receive respite services and in-home support. This helps James stay connected to the community and engage meaningfully within the community. Cutting Medicaid would jeopardize his complex medical needs and access to the community.

Anonymous

My daughter has Autism, and Medicaid has been a lifeline for her to be able to do things she would not otherwise be able to do. She's in the ID/RD waiver.

Daughter (Pseudonym Nelly)

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Nelly,
young girl

Has Down
syndrome



Wants to
be a part
of the
group!

With
Medicaid
as a
secondary
insurer,
she has
access to
therapies
to learn
to walk,
talk, and
build
skills.

She knows
one day she
can be
independent
and a part
of her
community,
with the
right
support.

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My daughter has Down Syndrome. We have Cigna and secondary Medicaid. But without the extra help from Medicaid, she would not have been able to receive the therapies that she needed to walk, talk, and learn to do everyday tasks like her peers. She deserves a chance to become an independent, contributing citizen in our community.

Anonymous (Pseudonym Julie)

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Julie,
teenager

Experienced
a traumatic
disabling
health
event

Competitive
dancer and
honors
student!

With
Medicaid
she is able
to continue
her road to
recovery
and care at
home, with
her loving
family,
instead of
being taken
away to an
institution

She has a
long road
ahead but
is
determined
to
progress
and be all
she can
be, with
the help
of her
supportive
parents



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My daughter was a healthy, happy, competitive dancer and honors student. Right before turning 13, she experienced a vein rupture due to a malformation of arteries in her brain. She was in the PICU for 7 weeks and in inpatient rehabilitation for 5 weeks. Upon discharge, she would have been sent to a skilled nursing facility had we not fought to take care of her at home. My husband and I both work in public service, and the financial impact of this unforeseen event would have been devastating for our family. With assistance from programs such as Healthy Connections/TEFRA, HIPP, Medically Complex Children's Waiver and Modivcare, she was able to and continues to be able to receive proper medical treatment, visits with doctors and specialists, durable medical equipment and the extensive therapies and skilled services she has required and continues to require. She has a long road ahead of her, but she continues to make progress. I was able to return to work within 6 months, and my husband a year after her event. Although our journey is difficult, thanks to the support we have in place, we are able to continue to meet her needs at home. A cut to any of her programs would be detrimental to her, her progress, our family, and her future quality of life. She is not just a name on a program list. She is a person who requires continued assistance. Life-changing events can happen to anyone at any time. Her story matters. She matters.

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Amelia,
parent,
advocate,
and
volunteer

A
community
builder
active in
her church
and civic
groups



Genetic
conditions
resulting
in
disability

“Medicaid
wasn’t just
a safety
net; it was
the
foundation
that allowed
me to
thrive...”

Without it,
I might have
been forced
into
isolation or
dependency.”

Independent
role model
& good
neighbor

able
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I was born with disabilities that set me on a different path from most. My

genetic conditions weren't just medical diagnoses; they were challenges that shaped my entire life. But I never saw them as limitations —just obstacles to navigate. I had dreams, ambitions, and a deep desire to contribute to the world around me. As I grew, I worked hard to build an independent life. I pursued education, engaged in work and volunteerism, and became an active member of my church and civic groups. I raised a family, advocated for others, and found ways to give back to my community. However, none of this would have been possible without the crucial support of Medicaid. Medicaid wasn't just a safety net; it was the foundation that allowed me to thrive. It provided access to healthcare, medications, and essential services that enabled me to manage my disabilities while pursuing my goals. Without it, I might have been forced into isolation or dependency. Instead, I became a role model, a neighbor, an employee, and an advocate. People often underestimate what disabled individuals can achieve. We are strong, capable, and determined. We don't want to just survive—we want to contribute. But to do so, we need the right tools. Medicaid is one of those tools. It empowers people like me to live independently, to work, to engage, and to be positive forces in our communities. My story isn't just mine —it belongs to countless others who, with the right support, prove every day that disability does not mean inability. It is time we shift the narrative. We are not burdens; We are builders. We are not takers; we are contributors. With Medicaid's support, we can continue proving that to the world.

Timothy

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Timothy, career man

Wants assurance that he can live with dignity in his own home

Is looking forward to retirement

Has kidney disease and diabetes

Medicaid allows him to live and thrive physically, mentally, and socially at home through his golden years.

Knows he can continue to contribute as a senior if he can live at home.



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I have spent my entire life working, contributing to society, and planning for

a retirement where I could enjoy my remaining years with dignity. Like many others, I now face health challenges—kidney disease and diabetes among them. Despite these conditions, I know that the best place for me to maintain my health, independence, and well-being is in my own home. But that possibility is now under threat. Medicaid is more than just a program—it is a lifeline. It allows elderly and disabled individuals like me to receive the care we need while remaining in our homes, where studies have shown we thrive physically, mentally, and socially. Without it, many of us would be forced into overcrowded, underfunded nursing homes or left without care altogether. The impact of such a decision would be devastating, not just for individuals but for the entire healthcare system and the nation as a whole. Stripping Medicaid from the elderly, disabled, and children with disabilities would place an immense burden on an already overtaxed healthcare system. We are facing a critical shortage of healthcare workers, rising costs of chronic disease management, and an aging population that is rapidly outpacing available long-term care facilities. Without Medicaid-funded home care, hospitals and emergency rooms would become even more overcrowded, driving up costs for everyone. Keeping individuals in their homes isn't just the humane choice—it's the fiscally responsible one. Home-based care costs a fraction of institutional care, reduces hospital readmissions, and lowers the spread of communicable diseases. It allows people to remain engaged in their communities, maintaining better mental health and overall quality of life. Medicaid provides an invaluable return on investment, saving the system far more than it costs. The reality is simple: cutting Medicaid will not save money—it will shift costs elsewhere, increasing the strain on an already fragile healthcare system. It will lead to worse health

outcomes, higher emergency care costs, and an overwhelmed infrastructure that is already struggling to meet the needs of a growing elderly population. We must protect Medicaid, not just for those of us who rely on it today, but for the future of our healthcare system and society as a whole. This is not just a matter of policy—it is a matter of humanity. Let us ensure that those who have contributed to our nation throughout their lives can continue to live with dignity, health, and hope for the future.

Brent

My son is visually impaired, along with other disabilities. His pituitary gland does not supply all of the hormones he needs to live, so he takes life -supporting replacement hormones that he can't afford without Medicaid.

Lolita

This program offers services that enable my disabled brother to live independently and contribute as a productive citizen of South Carolina. He has been diagnosed with spinal muscular atrophy, which severely impairs his mobility and impacts his quality of life. He requires assistance with basic activities of daily living, such as feeding, toileting, bathing, and grooming. However, home care services through the Medicaid program have allowed him to maintain his independence and become a strong support within his community and across South Carolina.

Aaron

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Aaron,
3 years old

Loves his
mama and
blue
sippy
cup.

“Without
Medicaid,
I'm not
sure he
would be
living and
healthy
today.”

Through
Medicaid he
was able to
receive
needed
surgeries,
eye tubes
to improve
his
hearing,
and
continued
OT, PT, and
speech
therapies.



Has Down
syndrome
and heart
defect

Is the
cutie on
the
pediatric
floor you
can't miss.

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My family relies on Medicaid, especially my son Aaron, who has Down syndrome

Syndrome. He was born with a heart defect and has had 2 open heart surgeries. He is only 3 years old. He is disabled and will always be disabled. Without Medicaid, I'm not sure he would be living and healthy today. He also sees ENT & has had tubes placed twice. Which has aided in his ability to hear. He also receives Occupational, Physical, and Speech therapies. All of this was made possible through Medicaid.

Anonymous (Pseudonym, Alicia and Janice)

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Alicia and Janice

Mother and Daughter duo



“The only way we are able to survive is with her Medicaid as her insurance coverage and SNAP. If it were not for these programs, we would be unhoused, and she might no longer be with us.”

Alicia has a heart condition and her mom is also disabled and only able to work part-time

Alicia wants to be a neurologist when she grows up

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My daughter has a heart condition that requires bimonthly visits with a

cardiologist and expensive medication. I have a disability and can only work part-time hours. I am a single parent. The only way we are able to survive is with her Medicaid as her insurance coverage and SNAP. If it were not for these programs, we would be unhoused, and she might no longer be with us. She is a smart kid and has plans to go to medical school to become a neurologist focusing on age-related issues such as dementia. Please do not take her dream away from her.

Larry

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Larry,
full-time
independent
person

College
grad and
proudly
employed



Medicaid
covered the
cost of his
expensive
medications
that he
could not
afford on
his own.

“With the
help of
Medicaid
and other
work
incentives,
I was able
to secure
full-time
employment
and leave
public
benefits
behind.”

Wants all
young
adults to
have the
same
opportunity
he did

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SOUTH CAROLINA

I received Medicaid as a young adult during college and while starting

employment. Medicaid is a way for me to cover the cost of expensive medications that I could not have otherwise afforded. With the help of Medicaid and other work incentives, I was able to secure full -time employment and leave public benefits behind.

Anonymous

Medicaid provides services that are vital to allowing my relative to be an active member of the community; with Medicaid, she is able to live at home while receiving services for day programs, where she is safe and cared for. Without Medicaid, most families who have children with disabilities would not be able to afford the care and services that are necessary.

Gina

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Gina,
PhD Student

Plans to use her psychology doctorate to benefit the community



Blind due to progressive retinal condition.

Medicaid supports her and her family of cancer survivors. Without it, they would have zero healthcare coverage.

Know that without Medicaid she would not be able to pursue her dreams.

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I am totally blind due to a progressive retinal condition, and I am currently

finishing my PhD in psychology. Medicaid has been my only means of accessing health care since moving back home to SC in 2015, and I use it for basic care and dental needs. My dad and stepmom are both cancer survivors, and my dad also has Parkinson's, and Medicaid is their only health care. I really do not know what I would do if I lost Medicaid, or if my folks did. This is hugely important, please fight to protect our health care.

Angelica

I enrolled my daughter in Tefra Medicaid when she was in elementary school, when it became clear that she had some developmental disabilities that were going to follow her through her entire life. Though it has been a secondary insurance thus far, it could become her primary insurance in the future. While she is able to work, she is not able to work a full -time job needed to secure insurance or any other benefit that is primarily obtained through employment under our country's system. I do not want her to lose this resource that will be more significant as her father and I, and she, age.

Sara (Daughter Pseudonym Lanie)

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Sara & Lanie

Mother daughter duo

Through Medicaid Lanie runs, jumps, and plays thanks to surgery and prosthetics care. Her mom survived an illness with Medicaid funded treatment and was able to get back to work, grow her income, and get private insurance.

Lanie received prosthetic care and Sara benefitted during life-threatening illness

“That coverage saved my life...”



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Medicaid TEFRA allows my daughter to receive prosthetic care so she can walk,

run, play, and enjoy her life. It's given her the ability to undergo multiple surgeries that have kept her out of wheelchairs and mobile. She's an active, happy kid because of Medicaid TEFRA. Prosthetic devices are exorbitantly priced, and mobility should be a right, not a privilege afforded only to those who are extremely wealthy or non-disabled. I was temporarily on Medicaid when I became a single mother. That coverage saved my life -- I developed a life-threatening illness that I couldn't have treated without it. Because of Medicaid coverage, I was able to reestablish myself in the workforce, grow my income, and buy my own medical insurance. If you wouldn't look my child in the eye and tell her she doesn't deserve to walk, and if you wouldn't tell a sick woman she doesn't deserve to get well, you shouldn't be voting to limit/do away with Medicaid coverage.



Victoria

My adult son Jonathon has Fragile X Syndrome. After raising my son for 30 years, he was selected to move into a group home in the community with three other adult men with a 24-hour staff. Jonathan goes to a day program during the week and comes home every Sunday. Medicare has helped us so much through the years with any surgeries, doctor visits, and medicines he needs to take for

anxiety and aggression. He is doing very well, and to disrupt any of these would be heartbreaking, as he has come so far. Please, please help all with disabilities.

I myself recently started receiving Medicare. After working my whole life since I was 15, I now need Medicare to help me on my fixed income. We are asking you to go to bat for us! Thank you.

Anonymous

We welcomed our beautiful daughter into the world in 2018, our second child, whom we had been hoping and praying for. Shortly after she was born, her doctors discovered she had a congenital heart defect that required multiple medications and eventual open heart surgery. A few years later, after noting a delay in milestones and speech, she was also diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and a global developmental delay. The frequent doctor's visits and necessary therapies for her to thrive, as well as her corrective open heart surgery, would be impossible for us (and many others) to afford without the assistance of Medicaid (and we are a family who only had it as a secondary insurance- we also pay for private insurance on our own). Our daughter is alive, healthy, and thriving, as well as rapidly progressing in all of her delays, thanks to Medicaid's help with the overwhelming cost of both basic and specialized medical care, and we are grateful every day for it.

Caroline

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Caroline, teacher to students with disabilities

Knows her kids can achieve great things with the right supports.



“Medicaid helps reduce absenteeism, improves classroom engagement, and enhances overall student success. Medicaid has been a lifeline for my students”

“When disabled students receive proper medical care, therapy, and interventions they can focus on learning rather than health struggles.”

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SOUTH CAROLINA

I have been teaching Special Education for 37 years. Medicaid has been a

lifeline for most, if not all, of my students and their families. Many disabled students require ongoing medical care, therapies, and treatments that can be costly. Medicaid covers services such as doctor visits, prescription medications, hospital stays, preventive care, and vision and dental care. Without Medicaid, many of the children and families that I have served and am still serving may struggle to afford these essential services, which are necessary for their child's well-being and academic success. Some of my students require specialized therapies to support their development and learning, including: Speech therapy – Helps students with communication Challenges, Occupational therapy – Supports students in developing fine motor skills and daily living skills, and Physical therapy – Helps improve mobility and motor functions. Medicaid has ensured that these therapies are accessible, reducing financial barriers for families. Through Medicaid's School -Based Services Program, the schools I have taught in have received funding for services to eligible students. These services include: Special education evaluations, nursing services, mental health support, assistive technology (e.g., communication devices), and much more. This funding has allowed schools to better support students with disabilities, ensuring they receive appropriate accommodations and services under their Individualized Education Program (IEP). A few of my students have experienced mental health challenges, such as anxiety, depression, or behavioral disorders. Medicaid has access to counseling and therapy, as well as behavioral interventions. Psychiatric care and Crisis intervention services. Access to these services helped my students regulate emotions, improve behavior, and succeed in school. Medicaid has a safety net, ensuring children receive necessary treatments without overwhelming medical expenses. When disabled students

receive proper medical care, therapy, and interventions, they can focus on learning rather than health struggles. Medicaid helps reduce absenteeism, improves classroom engagement, and enhances overall student success. Medicaid has been a lifeline for my students, ensuring they have access to the healthcare, therapies, and school-based services they need to thrive. Without it, many of them would struggle to get necessary medical care, which could negatively impact their education and future opportunities.

Medicaid has also helped my 84-year-old mother. She has limited financial resources. Even though she has not had to go into an assisted living facility or needed long-term care, Medicaid has helped with Medicare costs, which has reduced out-of-pocket costs for medical services. Medicaid has ensured that she has access to doctor visits, hospital stays, preventive screenings, and emergency care. Without Medicaid, she would struggle to afford these services. Medicare Part D covers her prescription drugs, and Medicaid helps with additional costs for medications such as high blood pressure. These services are crucial for maintaining her health and preventing her from being hospitalized often. My stepmother is also on Medicaid and needs it. She has used these services to get home health aides when she was hospitalized. She was able to use the transportation component to get to medical appointments, since she wasn't able to drive for a few months due to surgery. These services also support those with Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and mobility challenges. Without Medicaid, my mother and stepmother would face devastating medical costs because of limited income. Medicaid is essential for elderly individuals, particularly those with low incomes or significant healthcare needs. It provides long-term care, helps cover Medicare costs, ensures access to medical

services, and supports seniors in maintaining independence. Without Medicaid, my mom, stepmom, and many other elderly people would struggle to afford the care they need, leading to poorer health outcomes and reduced quality of life.



Ashley

My son receives vital therapy and respite care through Medicaid. He is non-verbal, non-communicative, needs a one-on-one person 24 hours a day. It is exhausting to care for him with the help of Medicaid. Without Medicaid, his safety and our family's safety are at risk.

Laura

My son had Medicaid when he needed intensive speech therapy. Without it, we could not have afforded to get him help. Now, years later, he has been diagnosed with Autism. We are applying for Medicaid again because there is therapy available that is not covered by our insurance. Without Medicaid, he won't get the extra help. I am already paying thousands in medical bills this year, with high-deductible insurance.

Kathy (Daughter Pseudonym Kate)

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Kathy &
Kate- age 14

Mother
daughter
duo doing
it all
and
winning
with the
right
supports



Kate loves
being
athletic
with her
mom and
swimming.

Kate has
Down
Syndrome

Medicaid
provides
coverage
for OT, PT,
speech, and
other
therapies
that help
Kate
thrive.

“We are not
trying to
“game” the
system or
“waste”
taxpayer
money;
instead, we
are trying to
build our
daughter up
so she can
meaningfully
contribute.”

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SOUTH CAROLINA

My daughter, who has Down Syndrome, has a busy life...but not the same way as other 14-year-olds might be busy. We are committed to giving her the best chance at employment (which is very low for people with cognitive disabilities) and an independent life, so let me tell you about her schedule. Every Tuesday, she goes to Occupational Therapy with a group of teenagers; our Medicaid pays for this. On Wednesdays, she gets therapy for reading (she is not yet reading, so this is really important to us). She also does speech therapy, which is paid for by our Medicaid. On Thursdays, she does a different form of OT, which is also paid for by our Medicaid. In between, she has appointments with the psychiatry clinic- people forget that people with disabilities also have mental health challenges, the Down Syndrome clinic, or the GI clinic (she has low muscle tone, which results in GI issues). She is an amazing kid, but what makes her amazing is the therapies she received: at the age of 16 months, she was walking because of her physical therapy, and she now swims with Special Olympics. These therapies, and the people who provide them, have become a lifeline for our family and many others like ours. Out of pocket, however, each of these would run us close to \$200 per session, which quickly becomes prohibitive, even for people in a privileged position like ours (I am a professor, and my husband is an IT Director). We are not trying to "game" the system or "waste" taxpayer money; instead, we are trying to build our daughter up so that she can meaningfully contribute to our society.

Dandrea

I'm a mother of two adults and a young lady on the autism spectrum disorder. My oldest daughter receives Medicaid, but not SSI. She works part-time; however, she does not have insurance. Because of her disability, she cannot

work full-time. She needs Medicaid to pay for her job coach from the disability board. Also, she needs it for her mental and psychological help.

Also, she needs it for a medical prescription. She's a young lady who does not drive and has very high anxiety and psychiatric needs. She is 32 years old and needs support and supervision. Without her job coach, she would not be able to maintain a job. I need you to get this - she must have Medicaid.

Laura

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Laura,
Foster and
Adoptive Mom

Mother
daughter
duo doing
it all
and
winning
with the
right
supports



Medicaid covers the therapy and medication needs for the many children they are able to support in an already overburdened system

Multiple children with disabilities who receive Medicaid.

Wants to continue to foster, but knows without Medicaid the cost would make it impossible

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We are a foster and adoptive family and have been featured on WachFox and in

advertising for Lutheran Services Carolinas. Our adopted children have Medicaid, as well as our foster sons. We plan on adopting our foster sons, but without Medicaid, I don't know how or if we can afford the therapies that our autistic foster son has. I also don't know if we will be able to continue to foster. If they take our adopted kiddos' Medicaid, we will likely have to stop helping an already overburdened system, as more children and families will struggle like never before. More children will come into care, and fewer homes will be open to meet their needs. We are terrified for the future of our most vulnerable Populations.



Ashley

My child has a rare genetic disorder called X-linked intellectual disability 98. This causes his autism and epilepsy. If not for Medicaid, he would not receive the therapy or specialized care he needs. He is also incontinent, and Medicaid covers the cost of his supplies. Aside from these things, Medicaid also covers the care assistance that is crucial for families like mine. Caregiving is vital to

our society and economy, and having help with that task helps keep my son out of institutional care.

Muriel

My youngest brother was born with multiple disabilities that required multiple medical procedures, surgeries, and therapies throughout his life. Without Medicaid, our family would not have been able to provide these services for him. We are thankful that we were able to provide a quality of life for my brother through these medical interventions funded by Medicaid. Cutting Medicaid and other benefits, such as SNAP, without actually understanding how the cuts will affect those receiving the benefits is irresponsible and cruel. Blanket changes to these programs will impact the most vulnerable in our society.



Adam

I am a single dad and power wheelchair user with a progressive, genetic muscle disease, and I would not survive without Medicaid. I currently have 40 hours of in-home care through a Healthy Connections waiver program and need every second of it to complete all of my activities of daily living, none of which I can do independently any longer. Without Medicaid, I cannot get into or out of

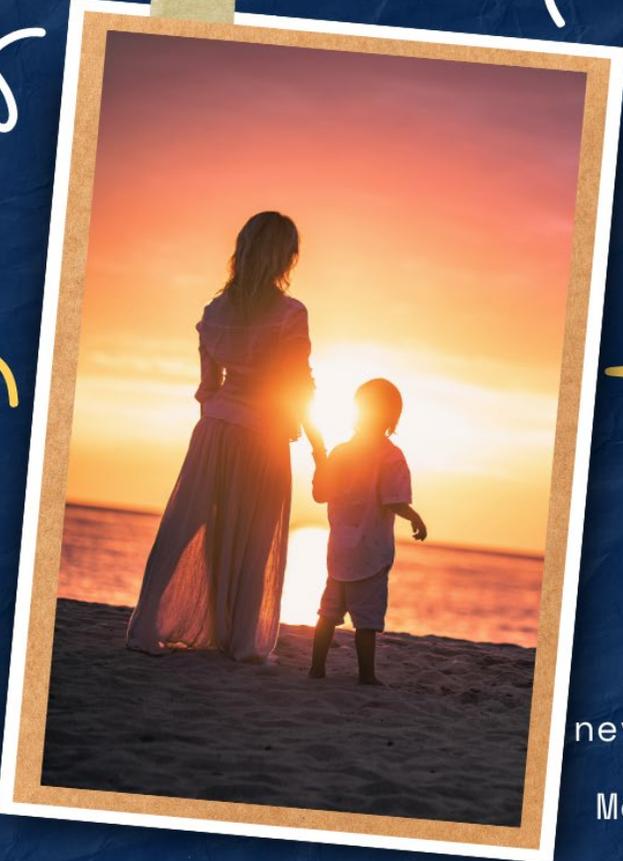
bed, eat, use the toilet, shower, change clothes, or leave my house. It is truly revealing that disabled Americans who desperately need support are increasingly seeing their tax dollars given to causes that don't benefit us.

Anonymous

I AM MEDICAID

Anonymous, fleeing abuse

Mother and son able to flee and survive thanks to Medicaid



Single mom with son with scoliosis

Medicaid made it possible for them to survive and now thrive, "The curve in his spine has reduced by 5 degrees, and he has gained 30 pounds and 6 inches in height since we moved away."

"We were never able to receive Medicaid in our hometown because of my ex's income, and he would not allow us to see doctors."

able
SOUTH CAROLINA

My son and I moved away from his abusive father in 2019. My son has scoliosis

and difficulty gaining weight. We were never able to receive Medicaid in our hometown because of my ex's income, and he would not allow us to see doctors. Having Medicaid as a single parent allows my son to get the care he needs. The curve in his spine has reduced by 5 degrees, and he has gained 30 pounds and 6 inches in height since we moved away. He is in therapy and is expected to grow to average male height or higher, and never need to brace. We are only able to access this life-changing care because of Medicaid.

Mike

I have a bullet in my brain (TBI) and need my head and spine Medicaid coverage for ongoing care.

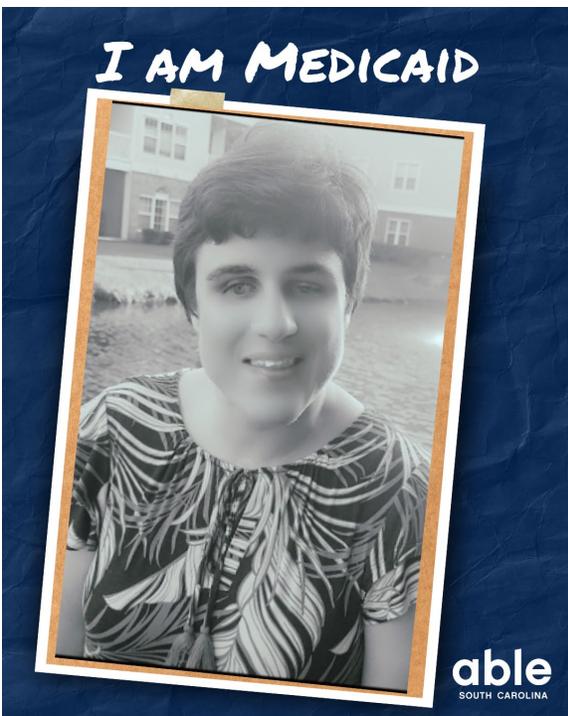
Anonymous

I really need my Medicaid because I'm disabled and I can't work, and I'm sick of losing everything that helps me out because I'm disabled.

Amber

I'm a single Mom of three kids. My oldest, Daniel (aka Dan -the-Man), is 22 years old and has a rare chromosome disorder called Kleeftstra Syndrome. He is approximately 1 out of 1000 who have been diagnosed in the world. He is also non-verbal, autistic, has hypotonic cerebral palsy, and has sensory processing disorder. He will never be able to be employed. I also have two other non-disabled kids. My kids are all well-mannered and healthy. Medicaid has helped all of us tremendously because without it, my son wouldn't receive respite and personal care hours, which enable me to work and to get some respite from always caring for him. I was told to get guardianship of him when he turned

eighteen because he is non-verbal, but makes lots of sounds. So I spent the \$4,000 to go through the process. After I did that, I found out that legal guardians don't get paid to be caregivers of their disabled adult kids. Medicaid pays for a respite care worker to care for my son, so I can work some hours. I have had to give up my career in veterinary medicine in order to care for my son when he doesn't have a caregiver. It also keeps us healthy by allowing us to go to the doctor when we need to. We NEED Medicaid and the benefits that go along with it. I'm 50 years old, and I suffer from chronic migraines and fibromyalgia, and I'm in perimenopause, which is very difficult. Medicaid allows me to get the care that I need so I can care for my family.



Stacie Chavis

My daughter is 29 years old and is Blind and disabled. If not for Medicaid, we would not be able to afford her seizure medication that she has to take twice a day. She also would not be able to attend an adult day center or have the transportation she needed. This is all needed so I (her mother and guardian) can work to keep a roof over our head and food on the table. Protect our adults

with disabilities!!!!



Beth

I am a single mother, and the Medicaid waiver for Luke is absolutely critical to our lives. I live in a small town where there are no daycare options for children in middle school with disabilities. It costs me a quarter of my income to provide after-school care, and with summer breaks, the cost is so high that it's not financially viable for me to continue working. The closest family

we have is my elderly parents, who live an hour away and aren't in good health themselves, so I can't rely on them for help. The in-home care I need for Luke is far more expensive, and he cannot stay with typically functioning children in his age group. Luke's brain doesn't communicate with his muscles, meaning he cannot perform typical tasks for his age, such as tying his shoes, brushing his teeth, combing his hair, washing himself, or picking up after himself.

Unfortunately, this is just the tip of the iceberg. In all likelihood, Luke will never be able to stay home alone for any length of time. However, he is still growing and capable of learning, and I desperately want him to reach his full potential. The problem is that I can't do everything for him all the time.

According to his psychological evaluation, his IQ is below average, and he struggles with basic skills like reading and counting money. While he can do some basic math, he has a very limited attention span for learning. I wish I had more time to work with him, but I just don't. It's an incredibly tough job.

Developmentally, Luke requires more assistance than most kids his age, and he still has bathroom accidents on a regular basis. He's also going through puberty, which is making everything more difficult for both of us. Luke can be very resistant to doing anything other than what he wants at the moment. He has frequent impulsive outbursts, and I don't have the time to get him the behavioral help he needs. I worry every time I get a call from his school. He is a sweet boy, but his outbursts are something I'm working hard to help him control. He just doesn't understand why he can't have what he wants or why he has to do even the simplest task. It's like he becomes a different person in those moments. The Medicaid waiver is essential so I can get the help I need before Luke becomes too big for me to manage. I don't want him to hurt himself, someone else, or me. I am overwhelmed and exhausted, and I really need a couple of days a week to work without the constant stress and guilt. It's taking a toll on my health, and I fear what might happen to Luke if I'm not able to care for him the way he needs. Just 4-6 hours of support each week would be life-changing for both of us. It would allow me to get my head above water and hopefully give Luke the help he needs to be the best he can be.

Cynthia

My sister was shot in the head, back in September 1998, and the shooter was never arrested. She survived and had brain surgery, and had both frontal lobes removed, so she can not do a lot for herself and needs a lot of assistance. I took care of her for several years after our mother passed. My sister has been on Medicare and Medicaid and needs both, as she can not work ever again. With insurance alone, she has many medical bills, and without Medicaid, there would be lots of co-pays that she could not afford to pay. She now lives in a group

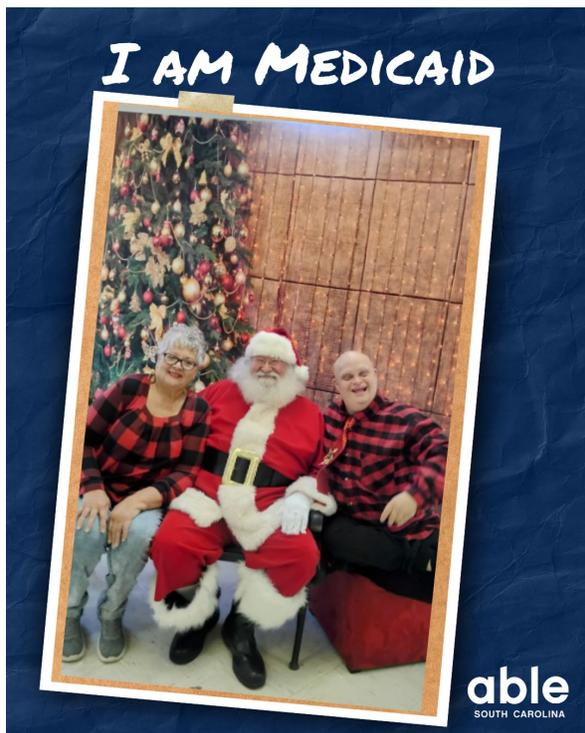
home and goes to an activity center daily. They make sure she gets involved with outside activities that come out of her monthly check. She needs Medicaid. Please look at cases and why many need Medicaid and can not work.

Anonymous

Without Medicaid, we would go without medications and therapies vital to our existence.

Anonymous

My brother has congestive heart failure. His Medicaid covers his heart medications.



Phyllis

My son is Jeremiah. Jeremiah has an intellectual disability, speech delay, and Down syndrome. He is 19, and Medicaid is his lifeline. Jeremiah's father passed when Jeremiah was 2 years old. So I have been Father, Mother, and his biggest advocate. Jeremiah needs his Medicaid for his waivers and so that he can stay home and not be placed in an institution or group home. Jeremiah loves people,

and he needs his chance to succeed in our community. We depend on Medicaid for his speech and occupational therapy, and the community waiver. I have had

to fight for so much for Jeremiah. Please, please don't let him lose his Medicaid. Please stand with the most beautiful and vulnerable community. Thank you for listening to my story.

Anonymous

I have a son with Down Syndrome. In order for him to thrive, we depend on the resources of Medicaid to help him. Without it, he may lose all his support and ability to be healthy and thrive in life.

Deborah

We moved from NY to SC when my son, Thomas, was 4. He has multiple disabilities, and we as a family could not have received appropriate services for him without the help of Medicaid programs. He has flourished over the years with Medicaid waivers that support his need for programs geared to independent living and safety in the community. He is now an adult who needs all of Medicaid's services to continue to live a productive, healthy, and happy life. Medicaid MUST be protected for people like Thomas, for ALL people with any type of mental or physical disability. We, as a society, cannot and will not see our loved ones suffer because their "population" is "less than desirable" by the government in charge now. I will do everything I can to protect my son, protect everyone who has disabilities, from losing the services they need so desperately.

Beverly

My son, who has a disability and has been on Medicaid and depends on his Medicaid to help cover services he receives at home through having an HCB

waiver...these are Medicaid waivers, so if he loses Medicaid, he loses his waiver!!



Alyssa

I no longer have Medicaid, but Medicaid is the entire reason I was able to get treatment for my debilitating blood disease as a teenager. My parents couldn't afford the transfusions, hospital stays, and specialist visits, not to mention the medications that saved my life and helped me thrive medically. I am now in my mid-twenties, and don't need medical

intervention for that blood disease as much as I did when I was a teenager. Medicaid saved my life, and I know it saves many people's lives every single day.

Anonymous

A member of my family is disabled and has a serious health condition. They are paid only minimum wage and receive Medicaid health insurance. They would not be able to live independently or work without it.

Anonymous

Medicaid has really helped me with my health problem. In 2006, I had a stroke. With Medicaid, I'm able to get my medicine that I need for diabetes, high blood

pressure, and anxiety. I'm currently slowly losing my eyesight due to diabetes. I've had many problems over the years, but I thank God that Medicaid is there to help me with the several surgeries that I had. We need to continue our coverage.



Christine

My son Nicholas is now 16. He has a genetic disorder that has left him nonverbal, nonambulatory, almost 95% dependent for total care, and drug-resistant epilepsy, among other comorbidities. Medicaid has access to much-needed therapies of speech, OT, PT, and ABA to help teach him life skills, the ability to communicate, life-changing equipment for his safety, and ours. We

would never be able to afford the four anti epileptic meds that he takes monthly to save his life. I agree that there is room for change to be more efficient and achieve goals financially. I know without Medicaid, our son's life would not have access to the therapies he needs to work towards being as independent as his skills will allow, and most importantly, have the necessary medicines he needs.

Anonymous

We are raising our four grandchildren, two of whom are disabled. My husband works 2 full-time jobs. He works 5 pm -5 am Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Then he works his own small business Monday -Thursday, often 10+ hours a

day. While I stay home to care for the children and our home. If it weren't for Medicaid, we could not afford the care that they require.



Lew's Mom

We are aged parents. Lew is 44 years old and requires care. We could not afford the things Medicaid has supplied him with over the years. Lew needs medical supplies, medical equipment, and a place to go during the day. He takes medicines and has many doctors. Without a personal care aide, a day program, and some respite, we would really have to struggle to keep him at home. We have been so appreciative of this. We love him

so and try our best to care for him. Please don't take these vital needs.

Anonymous

Medicaid pays for my medications for diabetic management, management of heart conditions, and health needs related to a necrotic femur head that needs surgical repair, care for a decades-long lower back injury. Eight years ago, I had heart surgery that saved my life. I am an independent business owner, and I work at my own pace to contribute to society and to earn some income.

Anonymous

I was once a high earner, but medical bills drained my savings. I've been on Medicaid for about seven years since needing brain surgery just before retirement. It has truly saved my life.

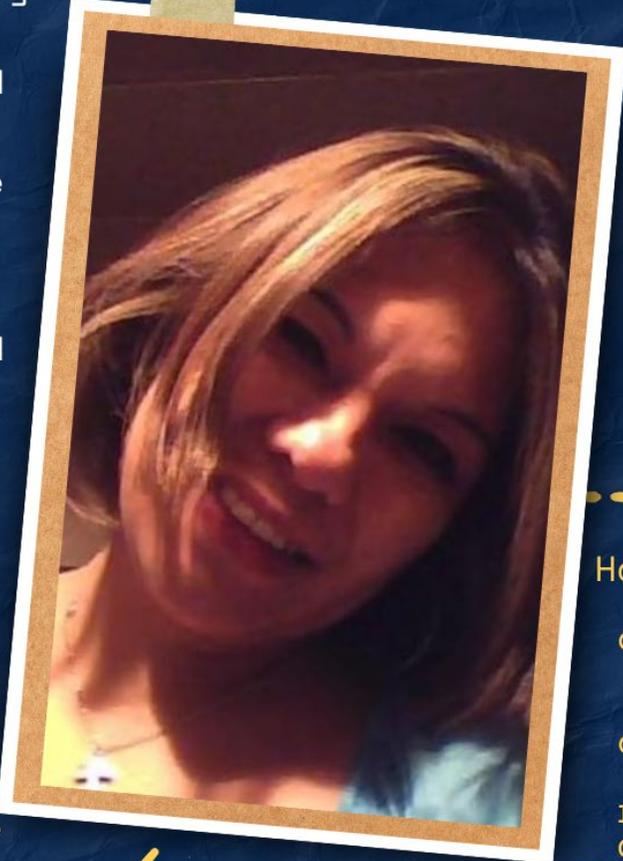
Teresa

I AM MEDICAID

Meet Teresa and family

Is able to survive and be there for her family, one day at a time, with the assistance of Medicaid

Experienced a displacing house fire that disrupted their family healthcare



“For millions of disabled individuals like myself, Medicaid is the difference between life and death, between functioning and suffering, between stability and crisis.”

Has multiple chronic conditions including tarsal coalition, osteo and rheumatoid arthritis, diverticulosis, PTSD, etc

Her family also depends on Medicaid for routine care.

able
SOUTH CAROLINA

The Lifeline: Why South Carolina Medicaid Matters to My Family and Me

For many, healthcare is a given—something they don't have to think twice about. But for my family and me, access to medical care is not just a necessity; it is a constant battle. As a disabled individual in South Carolina, Medicaid has been the only thing standing between us and the devastating consequences of untreated health conditions. Without it, the cost of care would be impossible to afford, and our quality of life would be severely diminished.

Living with Disability: A Daily Struggle

I live with multiple chronic conditions, including tarsal coalition, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, diverticulosis, episodic mood disorders, PTSD, anxiety disorder, and hypertension. These conditions impact every aspect of my daily life, from mobility to mental health. There are days when the pain is unbearable, when simply walking from one room to another feels like an insurmountable task.

Regular doctor visits, medications, and therapies are not luxuries for me —they are essential to managing my conditions and maintaining any level of independence. Without South Carolina Medicaid, I would not have access to the specialists I need, the diagnostic tests that track my health, or the prescriptions that help control my pain and symptoms.

A Family Depending on Medicaid

My family, too, relies on Medicaid. When our house fire left us displaced, we faced more than just the loss of our home —we also lost stability in our healthcare. The stress of rebuilding our lives took a toll on our physical and mental health. My child, who has also faced health struggles, depends on

Medicaid for necessary medical appointments, preventive care, and medications.

For my family, Medicaid is not just a program —it is our safety net. It ensures that my child can see a doctor when sick, that we don't have to choose between paying for medicine and paying for food, and that I can continue to receive the treatments I need to function. Without it, our already difficult situation would become impossible.

The Challenges of Navigating Medicaid

Even though Medicaid is a lifeline, accessing care is not always easy. Many providers in South Carolina do not accept Medicaid, making it difficult to find doctors and specialists willing to treat us. Long wait times, confusing paperwork, and sudden coverage changes add to the stress. There have been times when I have gone without needed care simply because I could not find a provider who accepted Medicaid in my area.

Yet, despite these challenges, Medicaid remains our only option. The alternative—going without healthcare —is not an option at all.

Why Medicaid Matters for Disabled Individuals Like Me

For millions of disabled individuals like myself, Medicaid is the difference between life and death, between functioning and suffering, between stability and crisis. Without it, people with disabilities would have no access to affordable healthcare, leading to worsening health conditions, unnecessary suffering, and even early mortality.

South Carolina's Medicaid program is vital for people who cannot work full-time due to medical conditions, for families trying to survive on limited incomes, and for those who need continuous care to maintain any quality of life. It is more

than a government program—it is a lifeline that allows people like me to keep fighting, to keep living, and to keep hoping for a better future.

I share my story not just for myself but for the countless others in South Carolina who depend on Medicaid. Healthcare should not be a privilege—it should be a right. And as long as I am able, I will continue to advocate for the preservation and improvement of Medicaid so that no one has to face the choice between suffering in silence and going without care.

Because, in the end, healthcare is not just about survival—it's about dignity, humanity, and the right to live a full life despite disability.

Surviving Tarsal Coalition: My Journey Through Pain, Perseverance, and Strength

From the outside, people often don't see the battles I fight every single day. They don't see the pain that radiates from my feet up through my body, making every step feel like walking on broken glass. They don't see the struggle of trying to move through life with a condition that most people have never even heard of—Tarsal Coalition. But I live with it. I endure it. And despite everything, I survive.

The Diagnosis That Changed Everything

I was diagnosed with Tarsal Coalition, a rare condition where the bones in the foot are abnormally connected, causing stiffness, pain, and difficulty walking.

Unlike many other foot conditions, this isn't something that goes away with time—it is something I have had to learn to live with.

For most people, walking is something they never think about. But for me, every step is a challenge. The pain can be excruciating, and the limited mobility makes

even simple tasks difficult. On bad days, it feels like my feet are locked in place, refusing to move the way they should.

Doctors told me what many with rare conditions hear: “There’s no simple cure.” Treatment options were limited. Some suggested surgery, but even that wasn’t a guaranteed solution. Others recommended physical therapy, orthotics, and pain management, but nothing could truly erase the condition. It was a reality I had to face—this was something I would battle for the rest of my life.

Living with Tarsal Coalition: The Daily Fight

Tarsal Coalition doesn’t just affect my feet —it affects my entire life. Simple things that most people take for granted, like standing for long periods, walking around a grocery store, or even climbing stairs, become exhausting and painful. The condition also led to secondary issues, including osteoarthritis and chronic pain that spread through my joints. Over time, I had to learn how to adapt —how to pace myself, how to listen to my body, and how to push through the pain when I had no other choice.

Some days, I rely on mobility aids, and other days, I am forced to elevate my feet just to get relief. But no matter how difficult it gets, I refuse to let this condition define me.

More Than a Survivor—A Fighter

Tarsal Coalition has taken a lot from me, but it has also taught me something invaluable: strength is not about being pain-free; it’s about pushing forward despite the pain.

I have survived this condition because I refuse to let it control my life. I am not just someone who suffers from Tarsal Coalition —I am someone who fights through it every single day. I continue to work toward my goals, build my

business, advocate for disability rights, and take care of my family, all while managing a condition that tries to slow me down.

Some might see Tarsal Coalition as a limitation, but I see it as a part of my story—a story of perseverance, courage, and resilience. I am a survivor, and no matter what challenges this condition throws my way, I will continue to rise above it. Because that's what survivors do.

You can take action

Able South Carolina, alongside our national partners, is standing firm in opposition to the House Energy & Commerce Committee's spring 2025 budget reconciliation proposal. This plan poses serious threats to the health, independence, and dignity of millions of Americans with disabilities.

The proposal would eliminate Medicaid protections that have long served as a lifeline for families, veterans, seniors, and working Americans with disabilities by:

1. Causing an estimated 13.7 million people to lose access to healthcare.
2. Creating \$715 billion in cuts to the healthcare system, accomplished by red tape.
3. Adding a 10-year federal ban on state and local governments regulating artificial intelligence (AI) systems, which can be used to deny essential benefits and care
4. Placing a decade-long hold on reforms that improve long-term care facilities.

These actions would reverse decades of bipartisan work to ensure our neighbors can live, work, and thrive in their communities.

- Red tape proposals like six-month eligibility checks and work requirements may sound like responsible reforms, but evidence shows they don't reduce fraud—they increase bureaucracy and create unnecessary burdens on honest, hardworking people while shifting resources away from medical care.

- AI systems can make life-changing decisions without warning or human review. Barring state and local governments from protecting their residents removes federal accountability and threatens our freedom.
- Adequate staffing and fair pay for care workers are not partisan issues—they're about safety, respect, and supporting the families who depend on these services. We deserve systems that value life over profit.

At Able South Carolina, we believe in responsible governance that honors human dignity, protects our freedoms, and strengthens our communities. This proposal threatens all three. We call on lawmakers to reject this path and stand up for policies that promote our lives, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. We stand alongside our national partners and urge you to contact [your Representatives and Senators today and telling them that any cuts to Medicaid are unacceptable!](#)