

Budget Reconciliation

Updated April 7, 2025

What's Happening in Congress and Why It Matters to You

- Right now, Republican leaders in Congress are considering a budget that could make the biggest cuts in history to healthcare, food assistance, and education programs that help millions of working families, including Latinos. This budget is moving through a special process called "budget reconciliation," which allows Congress to pass major changes quickly and without bipartisan support.
- **Why should you care?** These cuts could take away your family's healthcare, make it harder to put food on the table, and put college out of reach for many students. Instead of helping working families, this budget proposal would gut the programs that serve them and use the money to finance tax breaks for giant corporations and funding mass deportations.
- **When will this happen?** Congress is moving fast, with the House moving to pass the Senate version of the budget as early as this week. This budget bill sets the dollar targets for more detailed laws that make the actual cuts. Even setting a floor of cuts, which Senate budget does, would open the door to gutting critical programs that working families depend on. Because Republicans are using a special process that avoids the usual 60-vote requirement in the Senate, they can push these cuts through with a simple majority.

How This Budget Hurts You and Your Community

Cuts to Healthcare — Losing Coverage and Higher Costs

- This budget could slash at least **\$880 billion** from healthcare programs, including Medicaid, which covers **more than 70 million people**, including children, seniors and working families.
- **If you or your loved ones rely on Medicaid**, you could lose coverage, leading to higher medical bills, more medical debt and worse health outcomes.

- Cuts to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) could cause **5 million people** to lose health insurance, including many Latinos who buy their own plans. Families who keep their coverage could see their premiums increase by an average of **\$1,200 per year**.

- **Stories/Examples:**
 - [SPLC](#) (March 21, 2025): Angelica McCain, a mother from Hoover, Alabama, credits Medicaid with saving her 10-year-old daughter's life. During a routine check-up, doctors discovered a rare tumor on her daughter's ovary. Medicaid covered the surgery and ongoing care, ensuring her child received necessary medical attention without financial hardship.
 - [Axios](#) (March 25, 2025): Colorado resident Curtis Wolff, who has been largely paralyzed from the neck down since 2012, relies on Medicaid for daily assistance. An attendant helps him get in and out of bed each day, enabling him to work, exercise and maintain a social life. Proposed Medicaid cuts could jeopardize this essential support, significantly impacting his independence and quality of life.
 - [Washington Post](#) (March 9, 2025): In Texas, 19-year-old Jaylee Williams relied on Medicaid to cover the cost of delivering her son, Ryker. While hospitals in San Antonio refused to take her insurance, Medina Regional Hospital — just 15 minutes from her home — accepted Medicaid and provided the care she needed. Without it, she and her boyfriend had no idea where they would have gone for medical help. Now, Medicaid cuts threaten the survival of small hospitals like Medina Regional, putting critical healthcare access at risk for families in rural communities.
 - [Washington Post](#) (March 16, 2025): For Candice Fee, a 42-year-old from Harlan, Kentucky, Medicaid has been the key to rebuilding her life after decades of addiction. A Medicaid-funded treatment program provided her with counseling, therapy, and medication that helps reduce opioid cravings — giving her the best chance she's ever had at long-term recovery. Without Medicaid, which is America's leading source of coverage for treatment of substance use disorders, Fee fears she would immediately become homeless, lose her job and see everything she's worked hard to rebuild disappear overnight. Like many in her community, she's deeply worried that proposed budget cuts could take away the very support that has given her hope for the future.

Cuts to Food Assistance — Making it Harder to Afford Groceries

- The budget could lead to **\$230 billion in cuts** to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), America's largest anti-hunger program.
- **If you or someone you know relies on SNAP to buy food**, these cuts could mean less money for groceries each month. The average daily benefit is just \$6.20 per day.
- **One in eight Latino adults** has already gone into debt to afford food, and nearly two in five Latinos do not have enough food to eat. These budget cuts would deepen hunger and damage families' financial stability in Hispanic communities nationwide.
- **Stories/Examples:**
 - [El Paso Matters](#) (March 17, 2025): In El Paso, Texas, the local food bank announced a reduction in distribution days from five to four per week due to unstable funding. They also announced that 20% of their food pantry partners and 20% of mobile pantries would no longer receive food from the organization. This change affects many families who rely on these services for their daily meals, highlighting the direct consequences of decreased support for food assistance programs.
 - [El Tímpano](#) (March 21, 2025): The federal government covers 99% of CalFresh, California's food assistance program for low-income households. The proposed cuts could strip up to \$30 billion from CalFresh over the next decade. One research study estimated that 1.8 million children in California could be at risk of losing benefits.

Threats to Education — Making College Unaffordable

- The budget could cut **\$330 billion** from education and job training programs, which could include Pell Grants, which help low-income students pay for college.
- **If you or your child is hoping to go to college**, these cuts could make tuition unaffordable, forcing students to take on more debt or abandon their hopes for a better future through education altogether.
- **Stories/Examples:**

- [WCNC](#) (March 24, 2025): College students in North Carolina are bracing for potential cuts to federal financial aid programs like Pell Grants. Organizations such as Greater Steps Scholars are doing what they can to mitigate the harm, recognizing the significant impact such cuts could have on students, particularly for Latino families in North Carolina who are disproportionately lower income and depend on this support to afford higher education.
- [Worcester Telegram & Gazette](#) (March 20, 2025): Jessica Rhodes, a senior at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) studying robotics, said she is part of a Latino students in STEM group, and that Pell grants are critical to getting students into university programs such as WPI's respected robotics program. "Pell grants make up a lot of funding that allow a lot of these students, many of whom are the children of immigrants and first-generation students, and that funding is the reason they can afford to come to WPI and get a better education," Rhodes said.

Funding Mass Deportations Instead of Helping Families

- The budget increases spending on mass deportations, targeting **8.1 million undocumented workers** — many of whom have lived in the U.S. for decades and contribute to the economy in a variety of ways.
- **If you or someone you know is undocumented or part of a mixed-status family**, this budget threatens your stability and safety.
- Deporting millions of workers could reduce our GDP by **2.6%** and over 10 years, it could cause food and home prices to rise due to labor shortages.
- **Stories/Examples:**
 - [CalMatters](#) (Jan. 22, 2025): In Kern County, CA, unannounced immigration raids targeted businesses where day laborers and field workers gather. This led to acres of orange groves remaining unpicked as workers avoided areas of enforcement, causing significant losses for farmers and impacting the local economy. The ACLU subsequently sued U.S. Border Patrol for racial profiling and violation of their 4th Amendment rights against unreasonable search and seizure.

- [Vox](#) (March 25, 2025): Immigrant women make up a large portion of the child care workforce, especially in major cities. Increased deportations and enforcement have created fear and instability among providers, leading to staffing shortages, center closures and higher costs for families. That means parents — especially working moms — are left scrambling for care or forced to leave the workforce entirely, putting additional strain on household finances.
- [Vox](#) (March 25, 2025): In 2017, the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), a national anti-poverty organization, launched a multistate study on how Trump's immigration policies were affecting children under age 8. Early childhood educators reported disturbing new behaviors — increased aggression, separation anxiety and withdrawal — that they described as distinct from children's behaviors in past years. One preschool director in Georgia described a 5-year-old child whose anxiety was so severe that he was biting his fingertips until they bled.

What You Can Do

- **Share your story.** How do Medicaid, SNAP or Pell Grants help your family? Your voice matters.
- **Join community organizations** (like UnidosUS Affiliates) fighting against these cuts and advocating for a budget that puts working-class families first.

Additional Resources

- [UnidosUS Latino Voter Data Hub](#): Includes Congressional district-level data on the Latino voting-age population nationwide
- [Center for American Progress](#): Estimates of average Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) reductions in federal spending and enrollment based on Republican budget proposals, by congressional district
- [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#): SNAP Community Characteristics Dashboard Congressional District Explorer