

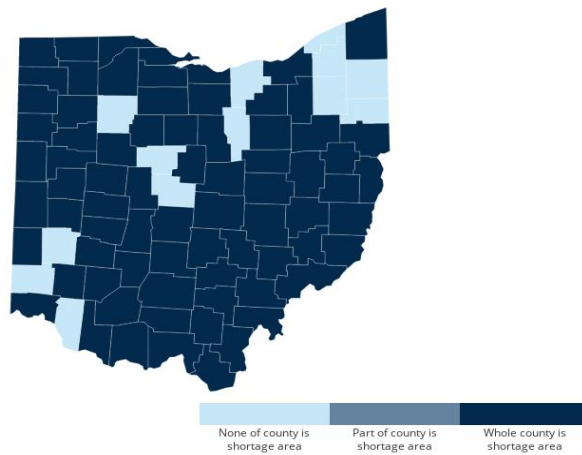
State of Social Work – Ohio 2024

More social workers are needed in Ohio.

Ohio's behavioral health workforce is in crisis, due to an unprecedented 373% increase in demand for mental & behavioral health and substance use treatment, including increases in anxiety and depressive disorder, trauma-related and stressor-related disorders as a result of COVID-19.¹ Mental health care workforce only increased by 174%, leading to provider shortages across the state.²

Eighty-five percent of counties in Ohio are designated as health professional shortage areas (HPSA) for mental health, which is a designation from the US Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) to identify geographic regions and populations with limited mental health care providers.³ This is a 9% increase from 2021.

Health Professional Shortage Areas: Mental Health, by County, 2024 - Ohio



Source: data.HRSA.gov, January 2024.

Social workers face increasing caseloads, stagnant pay, high burnout rates, and increasing student loan debt.

With increasing inflation and economic instability, social workers see greater numbers of people in crisis, in need of stable housing, food security, and health care. Workloads have increased, and salaries have stagnated.

- Average student loan debt for graduates of MSW programs is \$68,000-\$76,000⁴
- For all social workers, the national median annual wage is \$64,360⁵, and \$57,680 in Ohio.⁶
- Organizations face challenges in recruiting and retaining providers, due to low reimbursement rates, lack of training to serve diverse populations, barriers to enter the workforce, and shortages that increase burnout.⁷

Social Workers are highly educated, licensed professionals.

Most social workers have graduate level education and are licensed through the Counselor, Social Worker, and Marriage & Family Therapist Board to provide assessment and interventions at interpersonal, organizational, and community levels.

Ohio State University College of Social Work:

- Oldest continuously accredited public social work program in the country, first accredited in 1919
- Over 11,500 alumni across the world; 621 current BSSW students; 894 current MSW students; 45 PhD students
- Ranked #11 (US News & World Report) for all social work programs
- Graduate areas of emphasis: aging & health; mental health & substance abuse; child & youth services; and community & social justice

American Rescue Plan Act Local Impacts:

Great Minds Fellowship to Build Behavioral Health Workforce

Approximately 2.4 million Ohioans live in communities without enough behavioral health professionals. The Great Minds Fellowship (GMF) was designed to grow high-quality educational and training programs throughout the state, increase qualified graduates who are ready to enter the workforce, and provide for unmet need throughout Ohio.

Funding for the GMF is provided from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to support workforce development for home and community-based care from Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHC). Funds are awarded by the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

GMF provides financial assistance to students who are pursuing education and careers in the behavioral workforce. This creates additional opportunities for communities across the state to access care for those living with mental health and substance abuse disorders.

- Funding began in fall 2023.
- Each fellow receives up to \$10,000 within two years of graduating with degrees or certificates in social work, marriage and family therapy, mental health counseling, psychiatric/mental health nursing, and substance abuse/addiction counseling.
- Funding can be used to assist with the cost of obtaining degrees or certificates, paid internships at an Ohio CBHC, costs of required license and certification preparation, and exams.
- Fellows contribute to the growing of Ohio's behavioral health workforce, while jumpstarting their careers in social work.
- They are required to complete internships or placements at participating Ohio CBHCs, and upon graduation, commit to employment at a participating Ohio CBHC for at least a year.
- Ohio State University College of Social Work has over 70 students who have received the fellowship. Each student has started their fieldwork placement for completion of either a BSSW or MSW degree.
- More information can be found at <https://highered.ohio.gov/initiatives/workforce-development/great-minds>

(1) <https://tinyurl.com/3zb6x2bx>; (2) <https://tinyurl.com/mucwmvhu>; (3) <https://tinyurl.com/4vqjb2jm>

(4) <https://tinyurl.com/4cpx49ju>; (5) <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211029.htm#nat>;

(6) <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes211029.htm#st>; (7) <https://nihcm.org/publications/the-behavioral-health-care-workforce-shortages-solutions>



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H.R. 16 in 118th Congress

American Dream and Promise Act

This bill will provide a necessary pathway to citizenship for thousands of Dreamers and TPS Holders who have built a life in the U.S. and contribute to the socioeconomic prosperity of their communities. Yet, their livelihoods remain vulnerable to legislative limbo, and they live under the constant threat of being returned to a country that many do not consider home.

What this bill will do

The bill will allow some people who came into the United States as children to receive conditional permanent residence for ten years and an eventual pathway to citizenship. People who hold Temporary Protected Status and Deferred Enforced Departure will also be admissible under the law.

Why it matters to your constituents

DACA households significantly contribute to tax revenue: they pay \$6.2 billion in federal taxes and \$3.3 billion in state and local taxes annually.³

Dreamers are assets to our economy: they own more than 68,000 homes, contribute \$760 million in mortgage payments and \$2.5 billion in rental payments each year.³

Providing access to legal employment will reduce labor exploitation and human trafficking.

This bill will increase access to higher education, obtain employment in high-need jobs, and self-sufficiency.

This bill will reduce healthcare costs by permitting Dreamers and TPS Holders to access health insurance through legal employment.

Nearly three-quarters of adults favor granting permanent legal status to immigrants who came to the U.S. illegally when they were children.¹

Supporters

Human Rights Campaign. "The bill would provide DACA recipients and Dreamers, TPS holders, and individuals with Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) with protection from deportation and an opportunity to obtain permanent legal status in the United States if they meet certain requirements."⁵

American Civil Liberties Union. "The introduction of the American Dream and Promise Act marks a step forward in the fight for citizenship. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program changed hundreds of thousands of lives, allowing Americans in waiting to live in our shared nation without the daily threat of deportation."⁴

How you can help

Please support a sustainable solution for Dreamers and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) Holders by endorsing H.R.16 - The American Dream and Promise Act.

Bill Cosponsors

Rep. Chavez-DeRemer, Lori (R-OR-5)
Rep. Salazar, Maria Elviraa (R-FL-27)
Rep. Duarte, John S. (R-CA-13)
Resident Commissioner Gonzalez-Colon, Jennifeer (R-PR-At Large)

*114 more cosponsors

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¹ <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2021/2/4/22264074/poll-undocumented-immigrants-citizenship-stimulus-biden>

² <https://www.congress.gov/bills/118th-congress/house-bills/167?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%22american+dream+and+promise+act%22%7D&s=1&r=1>

³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/06/15/the-biden-harris-administration-celebrates-the-contributions-of-dreamers-on-ten-year-anniversary-of-daca/#:~:text=DACA%20households%20have%20significant%20spe,nding,and%20local%20taxes%20each%20year.>

⁴ <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/aclu-statement-introduction-dream-and-promise-act>

⁵ <https://immigrationforum.org/article/american-dream-and-promise-act-of-2023-bill-summary/>



H.R. 982 in 118th Congress

Pregnant Women in Custody Act

This bill works to ensure that those who are experiencing pregnancy and childbirth while in custody have access to adequate, equitable health care and all necessary resources¹

Approximately 3,000 pregnant women are admitted to U.S. prisons and 55,000 are admitted to U.S. jails each year

What this bill will do

- Provides appropriate safety, services, and healthcare for all pregnancies, leading to safer birthing outcomes, especially for those that are high risk
- Limits restrictive housing
- Prohibits solitary confinement during third trimester
- Annual reports claims from pregnant inmates must be filed by BOP

Why it matters to your constituents

- Most justice policies have historically not been designed for women- they fail to address issues that contribute to many women being involved in the system: domestic violence, trauma, poverty, mental illness, and substance use disorders
 - Women who are not/cannot be self-sufficient, often due to gender inequality, receive less resources and are often cycled back into the criminal legal system
- Pregnant individuals in custody experience disproportionate levels of negative birthing outcomes and lack resources, vitamins, and nutrients leading to increased negative impacts on preterm labor
- Higher risk of low birth weights and other complications for the fetus and mother
 - Children of incarcerated parents are six times more likely to become incarcerated and are significantly more likely to be suspended and expelled²
- Mistreatment and lack of care is particularly salient for people of color, and it is important to protect their rights in a system with prominent race and class disparity
 - Black Americans are incarcerated in state prisons across the country at nearly five times the rate of white Americans³
- Restraint during birthing process violates dignity and basic human rights
- Over 40% of states failed prenatal care policies involving medical exams, nutrition needs, high-risk pregnancy care, HIV screening, and pregnancy outcome reporting⁴
 - Data on incarcerated pregnant individuals is not required to be recorded which exacerbates inequitable and inadequate conditions
- In 2019, the U.S. lost over 32 million dollars to maternal morbidity. The passing of H.R. 982 will help improve health outcomes and mitigate some of that cost⁵

Supporters

- National Association of Maternal & Child Health Programs
- American Psychological Association
- Vera Institute for Justice

How you can help

Please consider refocusing your attention to H.R. 982: Pregnant Women in Custody Act



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Bill Cosponsors

Rep. Lesko (R-AZ-8)
Rep. Omar (D-MN-5)
Del. Norton (D-DC-At Large)
Rep. Jackson (D-TX-18)
Rep. Neguse (D-CO-2)
+17 additional

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¹ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/982>

² <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/hidden-consequences-impact-incarceration-dependent-children>

³ <https://www.ncsl.org/civil-and-criminal-justice/racial-and-ethnic-disparities-in-the-criminal-justice-system>

⁴ <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/mothersbehindbars2010.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/issue-briefs/2021/nov/high-costs-maternal-morbidity-need-investment-maternal-health>

S. 2246 in 118th Congress

Gender Affirming CARE Act

This bill is important to ensure funding to Gender Affirming Care research, to significantly reduce depression and suicide risk in transgender and nonbinary youth. Please consider cosponsoring.

What S.2246 will do:

This bill will allocate funding to the National Institute of Health and the CDC.

- Proposes \$25,000,000 be appropriated each fiscal year 2024-2029.
- Funding will be used to research barriers to gender affirming care and the impact of those barriers on health outcomes.
- The bill has been introduced to Senate and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

What is Gender Affirming Care?

The services typically provided through gender affirming care (GAC) can be summarized in three categories: social transition, medical transition, and legal transition.

Social Transition

- The process in which someone receiving GAC transitions their gender identity. This includes appearance, name, behavior, pronouns, and coming out.

Medical Transition

- Medical services include hormone therapy, speech therapy, hair removal, surgery, and chest binders.

Legal Transition

- Provides legal aid in changing an individual's name as well as learning the legality of services which vary from state to state.

Why it matters to your constituents:

Gender affirming care is consistently associated with lower depression and suicide risks in transgender and nonbinary youth. In the past year, 1 in 5 transgender/nonbinary youth attempted suicide (2). Gender affirming care reduces suicide risk by 73% and depression by 60% in trans/nonbinary youth (1). 65% of youth on gender affirming hormones are worried about losing access to care (2). These children are not prone to suicide/depression because of their gender identity, but because of the way society mistreats them and stigmatizes the healthcare they need.

Supporters:

American Medical Association, World Health Organization, National Center for Transgender Equality, Transgender Legal Defense and Education Fund, Human Rights Campaign, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, National Health Law Program, National Center for Lesbian Rights, GLMA, The Trevor Project, PFLAG National, LGBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders, Whitman-Walker Institute, Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition, Fenway Health, Transhealth, National Association of Social Workers.

Bill Cosponsors

Senator Alex Padilla (D-CA)
Senator Mazie Hirono (D-HI)
Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
Senator Peter Welch (D-VT)
Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR)

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¹ Mental Health Outcomes in Transgender and Nonbinary Youths Receiving Gender Affirming Care.

<https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.0978>

² The Trevor Project.

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/survey-2023/>

³ <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/what-is-gender-affirming-care#overview>



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H.R. 3004 in 118th Congress

Affordable Care Coverage Expansion and Support for States (ACCESS) Act

Support the ACCESS Act to ensure that low-income Americans have access to necessary healthcare, irrespective of their state of residence. This act will close the Medicaid coverage gap and offer hope and opportunity to low-income Americans, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives and actively engage in their communities.

What this bill will do

An estimated 1.9 million low-income Americans fall into the Medicaid coverage gap¹, earning too much money to qualify for their State's Medicaid program but less than the federal poverty level, making them ineligible for health insurance premium tax credits.²

The ACCESS Act would close this coverage gap and ensure that low-income Americans in non-expansion States have access to life-changing, and in some cases, lifesaving healthcare.

The bill would temporarily provide health insurance premium tax credits to those in the coverage gap and establish a Federal Medicaid program beginning in 2027 to provide healthcare access for these individuals in non-expansion states. This would close the Medicaid coverage gap and improve the health and quality of life for nearly 2 million Americans.

Why it matters

- "Research shows that access to care, financial security, the health of residents, and the economy all improved in states that expanded access to Medicaid."³
- Medicaid expansion has been associated with a significantly lower risk of catastrophic spending on healthcare.⁴
- "In Georgia, it's estimated [that Medicaid Expansion would] create 64,000 jobs and save rural hospitals (that primarily treat the uninsured) at risk for shut down."³
- Behavioral Health/Substance Use Disorder patients enrolled in expanded Medicaid programs reported improved access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment, prescription medicines and primary care, making them less likely to report the ER or urgent care as a regular source of care.⁵
- Medicaid expansion impacted criminal justice practice by significantly reducing arrests, particularly for drug selling and possession.⁶

How you can help

Advocating for affordable and accessible expanded healthcare coverage ensures that citizens in your communities have the opportunity to lead healthy and productive lives, even in the face of adversity. The ACCESS Act is an essential piece of legislation that has the potential to profoundly impact the lives of individuals in the Medicaid coverage gap, ensuring that low-income Americans have access to desperately needed care.

Bill Cosponsors

Rep. Frankel (D-FL-22)
Rep. Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
Rep. Green (D-TX-9)

Supporters

The following organizations support the expansion of Medicaid:

- AARP
- Alliance for Retired Americans
- The Arc of the United States
- Autistic Self Advocacy Network
- Brain Injury Association of America
- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

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How Many Uninsured Are in the Coverage Gap and How Many Could be Eligible if All States Adopted the Medicaid Expansion? (2024, February 26). KFF. <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/issue-brief/how-many-uninsured-are-in-the-coverage-gap-and-how-many-could-be-eligible-if-all-states-adopted-the-medicaid-expansion/>
- 2 **HealthInsurance.org:**
Norris, L. (2023, December 21). What is the Medicaid “coverage gap” and who does it affect? Healthinsurance.Org. <https://www.healthinsurance.org/faqs/what-is-the-medicaid-coverage-gap-and-who-does-it-affect/>
- 3 **11Alive News:**
How expanding Medicaid affects Georgia’s economy. (2022). [Video]. In 11Alive.com. <https://www.11alive.com/video/news/local/how-expanding-medicaid-affects-georgias-economy/85-be16035e-864f-48c8-a6b6-b28ea25cb295>
- 4 **National Library of Medicine:**
Scott JW. Medicaid Expansion and Trauma Care: Evidence vs Politics. J Am Coll Surg. 2022 Jan 1;234(1):95-96. doi: 10.1097/XCS.0000000000000001. PMID: 35213467.
- 5 **Academy Health:**
University of Michigan Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation, University of Michigan School of Social Work, University of Michigan Child Health Evaluation and Research Center; University of Michigan. (2017). Medicaid Expansion Experiences for Enrollees with Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders: A Mixed-Methods Study. Academy Health. <https://doi.org/https://academyhealth.confex.com/academyhealth/2017arm/meetingapp.cgi/Paper/18196>
- 6 **National Library of Medicine:**
Simes, J. T., & Jahn, J. L. (2022). The consequences of Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act for police arrests. PloS one, 17(1), e0261512. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0261512>

Supporters:

<https://familiesusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Health-Stakeholders-Letter-Enzi-Whitehouse-Budget-Bill-12.12.19.pdf>

<https://clinicians.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Medicaid-group-letter-w-signers-Jan-2017.pdf>

H.R. 4606 & S. 32 in 118th Congress

Choice in Affordable Housing Act of 2023

Please support the Choice in Affordable Housing Act of 2023. It offers vital incentives to increase landlord participation in the Housing Choice Voucher program, ultimately expanding access to affordable housing for low-income families in need.

What this bill will do?

There is a severe shortage of affordable housing in Ohio.¹

The Housing Choice Voucher Program (AKA Section 8) assists low-income individuals and families in renting safe and affordable housing in the private market. Participants receive vouchers to help cover a portion of their rent, and they are responsible for finding suitable housing that meets program requirements.

This program relies on the willing participation of landlords, which has declined significantly since 2010. Financial incentives **could improve landlord participation and access to affordable housing** for those who need it most. Improving housing access can better physical and mental health outcomes, increase stability and security for families, enhance educational and economic opportunities, and strengthen communities overall.

Why it matters to your constituents?

Annually funded \$100 million for five years, this bill would:

- Incentivizes landlord participation in Housing Choice Voucher Program.
- Allows for more affordable housing choices to arise.
- Allows dwelling units to meet inspection requirements for Housing Choice Voucher through participation in other housing programs.
- Decreases the time it takes for a unit to be approved.
- Reauthorizes through FY2028 for Tribal Housing and Urban Development-Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing programs.

Supporters

National Apartment Association, "This critical and timely legislation will bolster the HCV program by **stabilizing funding**, encouraging greater voluntary participation by housing providers and ultimately **improving outcomes for low and moderate-income households**."²

National Low-Income Housing Association, "NLHC supports the "Choice in Affordable Housing Act" and urges Congress to enact the bill, along with investments to **expand rental assistance** and legislation to **strengthen and enforce renter protections**, to ensure that people with the lowest incomes and the most marginalized people have stable, affordable homes."³

Bill Cosponsors

H.R. 4606
Rep. Chavez-DeRemer (R-OR)

S. 32
Sen. Cramer (R-ND)
Sen. Warnock (D-GA)
Sen. Smith (D-MN)
Sen. Moran (R-KS)
Sen. Lummis (R-WY)

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¹ 1. Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio
² 2. National Apartment Association
³ 3. National Low-Income Housing Association

H.R.4975 in 118th Congress

Eliminating Debtor's Prison Act for Kids of 2023

The *Eliminating Debtor's Prison Act for Kids of 2023* is important to ensure that at-risk youth have resources to secure their financial futures and take control of their mental and behavioral health.

What this bill will do

Named after the Juvenile Law Center's Debtors' Prison for Kids report¹, this Bill would earmark funds for rehabilitation services for youth. This Bill allocates funding to the Department of Justice for the payment of fees for youth involved in the justice system. Fees can include court fees, probation services, prosecutorial, and administrative fees. In addition to this, this Bill provides evidence-based, and trauma informed mental health and behavioral health services to the target population.²

The U.S. has the highest incarceration rates of youth in the world. In Ohio, the average stay for youth is approximately 15.5 months, which is about \$258,000 per youth.³

Why it matters to your constituents

This Bill will allocate funding for at-risk youth and youth involved in the adult and juvenile justice systems to pay for associated fees and provide mental and behavioral health services to the targeted population:

- More than 500,000 U.S. children pass through the juvenile court system yearly.⁴
- 20 states, across the political spectrum have already successfully reduced or eliminated juvenile fine and fees.⁵
- Fees and fines are insufficient sources of government revenue due to lack of repayment as jurisdictions across the U.S. have billions of dollars in unpaid court debts.⁶
- Helps to redirect resources to improve public safety and enhance community behavioral and mental health services.

Supporters

Organizations that support this legislation or work on this issue:

- Juvenile Law Center
- Berkeley Law Policy Advocacy Clinic
- Nation Center for Youth Law
- National Association of Social Workers (NASW)

How you can help

Supporting S.2448, will help reduce debt for youth involved in the criminal legal systems and build healthier communities with enhanced rehabilitative services for youth.



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Bill Cosponsors

Rep. Kamlager-Dove (D-CA)
Rep. Trone (D-MD)
Del. Norton (D-DC)
Rep. Ross (D-NC)
Rep. Espailliat (D-NY)
Rep. Schiff (D-CA)
Rep. Jayapal (D-WA)
Rep. Ivey (D-MD)

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¹ Debtors' Prison for Kids Report
<https://debtorsprison.jlc.org/documents/JLC-Debtors-Prison.pdf>

² <https://www.congress.gov/bills/118/congress/house-bills/4975/all-info>

³ Promise over punishment
<https://www.policymattersohio.org/research-policy/quality-ohio/justice-reform/promise-over-punishment#:~:text=That%20breaks%20down%20to%20an,more%20than%20%24258%2C000%20per%20youth.>

⁴ Juvenile Court Fees and Costs Are Invisible Shackles That Tether Children to a Broken System
<https://imprintnews.org/opinion/juvenile-court-fees-and-costs-are-invisible-shackles/243627#:~:text=Each%20year%2C%20more%20than%20500%2C000,to%20them%20and%20their%20familie>

⁵ Eliminating Debtor's Prison for Kids Bill Introduced in Congress
<https://jlc.org/news/eliminating-debtors-prison-kids-bill-introduced-congress>
<https://www.development.ohio.gov/files/research/p7005.pdf>

⁶ The Steep Costs of Criminal Justice Fees and Fines
<https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/steep-costs-criminal-justice-fees-and-fines>