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## **MEDICAID CUTS THREATEN THE HEALTH AND DIGNITY OF COLORADO'S IMMIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

***CRIMH strongly condemns cuts to healthcare in the  
“H.R. 1 One Big Beautiful Bill Act”***

**Denver, CO** – The Coalition on Refugee and Immigrant Mental Health (CRIMH) convened by Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning, along with our partners and the community members we serve, strongly condemn the Medicaid cuts in the federal “[H. R. 1 One Big Beautiful Act](#)” signed into law by President Trump in a celebratory event on July 4th. The law will seriously affect the health and well-being of immigrant and refugee communities living in Colorado, many who have escaped war, violence, and disasters only to face barriers to healthcare in the country they now call home.

Colorado could lose up to [\\$2.5 billion in federal Medicaid funding annually](#), putting at least [21,000 undocumented Coloradans at risk of losing Medicaid](#). The law will also make it harder to stay enrolled in Medicaid by requiring work reports and frequent reviews, [including proof of employment](#). This is especially challenging for those who struggle with English or are still learning to navigate the U.S. system and for those with unstable employment, caregiving responsibilities, or mental health challenges. The law also threatens State Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs (SPAPs) that help low-income Coloradans, including documented immigrants, to have access to lifesaving medication. The law also excludes lawfully present refugees and asylees from [key programs](#) such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or food stamps,

Medicaid, and Medicare, which they have previously had access to before obtaining green cards status. A summary of the specific [impacts of these cuts on refugees and forcibly displaced populations](#) is available from the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants.

The GOP-backed budget reconciliation act [strips health coverage from over 112,000 Coloradans enrolled through Connect for Health Colorado](#) by slashing Affordable Care Act tax credits and imposing new restrictions, harming immigrants and low-income families even more.

Access to the Child Tax Credit based on immigration status is another troubling aspect of this law. It aims to make permanent the provisions of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that excluded an estimated 1 million children without Social Security numbers from the Child Tax Credit (CTC). Additionally, it prohibits an estimated 2.6 million or more children whose parents do not have Social Security numbers on their tax returns from receiving the CTC. One such [story](#) is that of *Frida* (name changed for privacy), a single mother of five in Larimer County, who shared her experience with Alianza NORCO, a trusted immigration services partner in Northern Colorado:

*“The Child Tax Credit wasn’t just helpful; it was essential. It helped me pay for school supplies, transportation, babysitters, and food for my children. It gave me space to breathe, to catch up on bills, and even to buy my kids a new pair of shoes. But since the benefits are cut, I will have to sell my belongings, rely on food banks, and ask relatives for help just to make it through the month. I work hard at a local pawn shop, and my children, U.S. citizens, depend on me. But now I’m barely earning enough to keep the lights on. I’ve lost SNAP, and I’m managing a new diabetes diagnosis without coverage for therapy. Every day, I fear I’ll lose our home. I’ve lived in the U.S. for 23 years. I follow the law, contribute to my community, and dream of a better life for my kids. I’m not asking for anything extra, just the chance to care for my family with dignity. The Child Tax Credit was never just extra money for us—it was the thread that held everything together. Without it, that thread is wearing thin.”*

Frida’s voice reflects the fear and hardship experienced by many in Colorado’s immigrant communities and the impact this law will have on them.

Immigrants and refugees contribute significantly to Colorado’s communities and economy. [According to American Immigration Council data](#), immigrants make up 11.6 percent of Colorado’s workforce. They account for 13.1 percent of entrepreneurs, 12.2 percent of STEM workers, and 20.7 percent of the construction workforce in the state. Undocumented immigrants collectively contributed \$1.7B total in state, local, and federal taxes in 2023. Yet, they often work in jobs that do not offer health insurance and already face barriers such as language access and lack of culturally competent care. Therefore, removing Medicaid coverage will likely increase preventable deaths and

chronic illness due to delayed care, drive more people into emergency rooms, and undermine [the progress Colorado has made in expanding health equity and inclusive care](#). Organizations around Colorado are already stretched thin providing emergency health navigation, language access services, other integration supports such as English training, and urgent stopgap services like food access and housing support.

Colorado has long been a leader in [advancing immigrant rights and inclusive healthcare](#). We cannot allow federal policies to drag us backward. Community leaders and allies within CRIMH urge our elected leaders to publicly oppose these cuts, protect state-funded programs, and support the locally established health systems serving refugees and immigrants. To deny healthcare, nutritional assistance, and tax credits well-established to mitigate child poverty to immigrants and refugees is morally wrong and socioeconomically irresponsible and must be condemned in the strongest terms possible.

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**Coalition on Immigrant and Refugee Mental Health (CRIMH):** Founded in January 2024 by Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning and led in collaboration with Mental Health Colorado, CRIMH is a group of 80+ people who care deeply about refugee and immigrant mental health. The coalition supports state-level policies that improve mental health services for refugees and immigrants. It continuously seeks input from service provider partners and individuals with lived experience to uplift the mental health needs of impacted populations across Colorado.

**[Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning:](#)** Founded in 1979, Spring Institute for Intercultural Learning is a nationally recognized provider of effective intercultural learning programs and services striving to build a thriving intercultural community through learning, language access, and advocacy.