Healthcare Heist Emergency Week of Action Toolkit
January 6-15, 2026

What We're Fighting For and Why Now

The stakes: Healthcare costs for 22 million people will double, or even triple, starting January 1, 2026, and up to 6 million will go without healthcare because they can no longer afford it, all to fund billionaire tax cuts.

We need better healthcare, not less healthcare, but Trump and Congressional Republicans voted to send our healthcare costs skyrocketing to pay for tax cuts for billionaires.

It may be a new year, but we have the same old problems: millions of Americans are struggling to pay for basic healthcare and Republicans would rather talk about anything else besides affordability.

Cuts to the Affordable Care Act are one of the biggest early impacts of Trump's tax bill and higher prices kick in when people start paying for their 2026 plans in January. Open enrollment, the period when people sign up for healthcare for 2026, ends January 15 (in most states). This is not a drill,

this is not hypothetical, real people are being forced to make excruciating choices in order to pay for care or drop it altogether.

Due to public outcry — thanks to activists like *you* demonstrating strong public support all across the country this fall — Congress is considering a number of options to try and address healthcare costs. The Senate has voted on two separate proposals with neither having enough support to pass. The House has multiple proposals as well as discharge petitions (a wonky trick for bringing legislation supported by a majority of members but not the Speaker to the floor for a vote) under consideration.

On January 6th, the House will return and with 218 signatures on Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries' discharge petition calling for a clean, 3-year extension of the ACA credits, Speaker Johnson will have to bring it to the floor for a vote. It is still possible for other political maneuvers and other proposals to be put forth, but the best solution is a clean, 3-year extension. If the House does pass a bill, the Senate would have to negotiate as well, and there are currently several members proposing a weaker version of an extension that would cut coverage for many. And of course, President Trump would still have to support an extension.

Finally, the current Continuing Resolution (the bill that keeps the government funded and ended the recent shutdown) expires on January 31, 2026. That means that there will likely be another inflection point - and possibly another shutdown - around the next budget negotiations in mid to late January. We are winning, but we have not yet won. This Week of Action will be a critical time to share the stories of the harsh impacts of cuts to critical healthcare programs.

Topline Actions

- Pre-House vote: Public pressure and storytelling. 218 votes are needed on multiple rounds of voting on January 7 & 8 to pass a clean extension. Keep the pressure on moderates who have previously said they want to fix the problem.
    - Organizational and grassroots calls into Congress
    - Earned media
- [Thursday January 8: Social Media Day of Action](#)
    - Post testimonials from people directly impacted by healthcare cuts
    - Tag your local member of Congress and use #HealthcareHeist or one of our [graphics](#)
- Post-House vote: public feedback/actions
    - Thank supporters and call out those who voted to cut healthcare
    - If the House vote passes: Call on the Senate to pass a clean extension

Full talking points here [LINK](#).

Top Tactics

Die-In

An impactful tactic that can help drive home how these healthcare cuts are causing real harm is to stage a die-in at a local landmark. You can use [data](#) on how many people are estimated to die in your state as a result of the cuts to healthcare and recruit that number of people to lay down at a specific location. (If needed, you can use a proportional number if your state's number is particularly large.)

A die-in is a form of peaceful protest — remember that you have the right to assemble in public spaces, but be sure to secure permits if required. Suggested locations include the State Capitol building, local Member of Congress' office, City Hall, local town square, or local medical facility.

Sample Agenda
- Speaker 1 - organization leader
- Speaker 2 - storyteller - person who is directly impacted by ACA or Medicaid cuts
- Speaker 3 - validator - medical professional
- Die-in - Everyone lies down for a symbolic number of minutes

This effective event was held in Boise, Idaho. [KVTB](#) and [Idaho Capital Sun](#)
⊞ Preventable deaths by state, Dec 2025

Emergency Room Press Conference

Organize an event outside your local hospital emergency room with storytellers, ER doctors or other validators, and supporters with signage. Invite the media and prepare the storytellers/validators to share their stories. You could also use this as an opportunity to highlight a medical facility that is closing due to healthcare cuts.
[Sample press release](#)

Storytellers and Validators

The most important piece of any action is having personal stories of the direct impacts the cuts to the Affordable Care Act or Medicaid will cause. Because this is the first month that folks will be paying much higher ACA premiums or going without coverage, finding people that buy their own insurance through the ACA marketplace is the top priority. Independent contractors, small business owners and employees, farmers, gig workers, hair stylists, and nail technicians are common professions that buy their insurance on the marketplace. Young people 26 and up who are no longer on their parents' plans and 50-64 year olds who don't yet qualify for Medicare and no longer work full-time are also big marketplace customers. People who WANT to buy their healthcare on the marketplace are also good candidates. We have also had good storytellers who are Medicaid users that no longer qualify and want to buy their insurance on the exchange instead.

Second best is finding validators who represent communities that will be impacted. This could be doctors, nurses, hospital staff, and community leaders. The healthcare cuts overall are putting a strain on rural and community hospitals and many are closing. In California, the director of the state health marketplace herself joined a press conference to speak out against the cuts.

These are the best spokespeople you can have at your event. Use the leadup to the week of action to ask around, survey your lists, and connect with other groups to identify 3-5 storytellers and validators.

Key elements of a good personal story:
- Why is healthcare important to them? Does it help them as a small business owner? Do they have a medical condition?
- How the cuts will impact them — how much will their costs go up? What might they lose? What are they having to choose between to pay for healthcare?

Story Collection Form: If you've identified storytellers that are willing to share their stories with the press or members of Congress, please direct them to complete this short form so our team can follow up. Once someone submits an entry, our team will conduct vetting, consent, and verification on a rolling basis to confirm the storyteller's comfort level, ensure credibility, and check for any risk or privacy concerns. From there, storytellers will partner with our press and legislative teams—either for media opportunities or to share their stories directly with Members of Congress and staff. The storytelling form link is https://bit.ly/tellyourhcstory.

Small Business Roundtable
Convene a roundtable with small business owners and leaders who will be impacted by the loss of the healthcare tax credits. Invite the media and representatives from your local congressional offices.

Call-In Day
Keep the pressure on your Members of Congress with calls from local constituents into their district offices. Encourage people to share their stories and voice support for restoring the healthcare tax credits.

Digital Tactics
January 8, #HealthcareHeist Social Media Day of Action
Thursday January 8 will be a coordinated social media day of action. Please prepare posts for January 8 and include the #Healthcareheist hashtag. The top priority is to post testimonials from storytellers and validators. The social media guide links to graphics and other suggestions. Some suggested posts:

- Share stories from storytellers directly impacted by ACA price spikes. This can look like:
  - People recording a video with the screen showing their new healthcare premiums (don't show personal info). See an example from ESPA partner and content creator Michael Mezz here, and a great, minimally-edited example from co-sponsor Main Street Alliance here.
  - Text posts of written submissions with quotes from impacted individuals. See a great example from co-sponsor Community Catalyst here.
- Download and re-upload, or make a reaction video to, any of the high-performing videos on ACA cuts in our ACA/Medicaid Social Content list!
  - *Using existing content that has already proven to do well is consistently an excellent way to give your social media pages a reach + engagement boost on the ever-changing algorithms of social platforms, so we HIGHLY encourage this strategy. Just remember to tag the original creators in your caption!*
  - Our full social media guide has detailed instructions on how to do this.
- People talking about why healthcare is important to them
- Uplift/amplify others' posts! Search for the #healthcareheist hashtag, or search for any of the co-sponsors listed at the bottom of this toolkit to find posts.
- If you've done an action recently, re-up content from that with a new post
- **Please use #HealthcareHeist so we can find it!**

Social Media Campaign

ESP's comprehensive social media guide lives here. It includes guidance on recording videos, suggested posts to amplify, and other great materials.

Video/Written Story Collection

Collect video or written stories using ESP's tool here. If you already have storytellers identified feel free to send them the form directly. Otherwise, send it to your lists, share through social media, or whatever your preferred method is. ESP will share those stories with members of Congress and the media. You can use these sample materials to email the tool to your networks, hand out flyers at events, and make a top-tier video.

Host Your Event on Mobilize

Mobilize Event Page

Step 1: **Click this link** to navigate to the "Healthcare Heist" campaign page.

Step 2: **Fill in event details:** Provide the necessary information for your event. Any pre-filled suggested language can be changed. This includes:

- Event name
- Description and instructions
- Date and time (click "Add times +" to specify shifts if needed)
- Location (for virtual or in-person events)

- Contact information

Step 3: **Review and publish:** After filling out the form, you can review your event details. Once you are satisfied, click "Publish event" to make it live.

Step 4: **Invite people!** You can use the invite link to send to your lists and use Mobilize to manage signups. Be aware that Week of Action co-sponsors (other organizations) might also be directing members to the signup page if they have local members. You can see all hosted events here. If you have any questions you can contact events@economicsecurity.us.

Find an event near you
[Will be updated in January]

Messaging
- The cost of everything is going up, the last thing people can afford is more expensive healthcare.
- Trump and Congressional Republicans are cutting healthcare for everyday working families.
- In [STATE], premiums are projected to rise by $X,XXX a year on average (see fig. 9, dollar change in linked source).
- *Insert testimonial from storyteller directly impacted.*
- Congress should work together NOW to make sure prices don't go up even more. Republicans cut healthcare and sent monthly health costs skyrocketing, but they can still bring down costs for millions if they act now.

The main frame we want to stay in is AFFORDABILITY. Emphasize costs, using real data or real stories from real people whenever possible. All states' real prices are available now.

Full talking points here LINK.

Media
Media coverage for your events is key to amplifying the message so more people know more about the healthcare cuts, what we're fighting for, and who is to blame. Invite the media to your event, make sure you have someone set up to take pictures and video so you can post to social media using #HealthcareHeist as well. Refer to the social media guide for tips on posts and recording great videos.

Sample press release here LINK

Reporting Back
Let us know how your event went! Healthcare Heist Reporting Form

Resources

All shared resources live [here](#). They will be updated on a rolling basis, including:

- [Graphics](#)
- [Story Collection Template Materials](#)
- [Main Street Alliance Healthcare and Taxes Toolkit](#)
- [Spanish Translated Materials](#)

Co-Sponsors

This campaign is part of ESP's broader Affordability Agenda — fighting for an economy where everyone can afford their basic needs, including healthcare. We're building on the momentum from our tax fight to demand Congress put working families before billionaire tax cuts.