



REPRESENTATIVE
TRISTAN WILLIAM RADER
SERVING OHIO'S 13th STATE HOUSE DISTRICT

January 14, 2025

Maureen Corcoran
Director of the Department of Medicaid
50 West Town Street, Suite 400
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: Medicaid Work Requirement

Dear Director Corcoran,

As State Representative of the 13th House District, it is my duty to advocate for policies that uplift Ohioans and ensure our communities thrive. That is why I feel compelled to speak out against the Ohio Dept. of Medicaid's (ODM) request for a federal government waiver to implement Medicaid work and community engagement requirements.

This proposal, which was mandated in the last state budget by the Republican majority, if enacted, would threaten the healthcare of over 62,000 Ohioans, creating unnecessary barriers to accessing essential services. Simply put: more bureaucracy in order to access healthcare is not the answer.

Similar requirements in other states, such as Arkansas, resulted in catastrophic outcomes. Over 18,000 people lost their healthcare before courts stepped in to halt the program. There is no evidence that these policies increase workforce participation, but there is ample evidence that they cause harm. Those in Arkansas initially removed due to the requirement not only faced delayed medical care, but now have large medical debts of thousands of dollars that these people already could not afford.

This mandate can also severely increase the Ohio medical costs. Georgia was one of the first states to implement work requirements through the Georgia Pathways program. The new red-tape and high cost of the program has led an average of \$13,000 was spent per enrollee. Meanwhile, ODM 2022 data shows the average cost per Medicaid enrollee in Ohio for all eligibility groups is \$9,520. Do we want to put more costs on Ohioans?

This policy would impose an undue burden on Ohio's Jobs and Family Services (JFS) offices, which are already stretched thin. JFS staff are tasked with managing complex cases and assisting struggling families. Adding another layer of red tape to verify work requirements will further strain these agencies, leaving them less able to serve those in need. The result? More families falling through the cracks.

For individuals, especially those facing economic hardship, the consequences would be devastating. Many of the people targeted by these requirements are already working in low-wage jobs with unpredictable schedules or caregiving responsibilities. They may lack access to reliable transportation or childcare—barriers that make it difficult to meet rigid work requirements, even if they are willing and able to work. Instead of lifting people up, these policies punish them for circumstances often beyond their control.

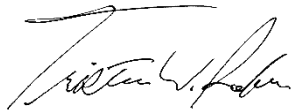
We cannot have a strong economy without a healthy workforce. This is a simple but powerful truth. Medicaid is a lifeline for so many Ohioans, enabling them to access preventative care, manage chronic conditions, and stay healthy enough to work. Undermining that lifeline with unnecessary bureaucracy will do nothing to address workforce challenges and will leave Ohio with a weaker, sicker population.

Moreover, this policy could jeopardize some federal funding for Medicaid, a program that is two-thirds federally funded. Turning away those dollars to impose harmful work requirements is fiscally irresponsible. It does not make sense to reject funds that support healthcare access for the sake of a policy that is proven to fail.

If we want an economy that works for Ohio, we must start with a healthy population. Investing in healthcare access, addressing barriers to employment like affordable childcare and transportation, and supporting job training programs are proven strategies to strengthen our workforce. These are the kinds of policies that empower Ohioans to succeed, not punitive measures that take away their healthcare. I encourage you to please hear the voices of countless Ohioans who are depending on this healthcare coverage.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tristan W. Rader". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "T".

Tristan W. Rader
State Representative
House District 13