

Trump's "One Big Beautiful Bill" will devastate healthcare and food assistance programs in New York

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Among the array of devastating impacts resulting from the adoption of President Trump's "One Big Beautiful Bill" is the huge reduction in federal funds for social services provided by state and municipal governments across the country. A major impact of this draconian assault on the working class and poor will be on healthcare and food assistance programs.

The legislation will cut the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, aka food stamps) by as much as \$186 billion over the next decade. More than 22 million families will lose some or all of their benefits, both from direct cuts, tightened eligibility requirements, and increased paperwork that many recipients will fail to complete. In addition, Trump's budget has completely eliminated SNAP-Ed, which funds nutrition education and anti-obesity initiatives for children nationwide. It has been a vital source of fresh, low-cost fruits and vegetables, which are often difficult to find or too expensive in low-income neighborhoods.

Also on the chopping block is Medicaid, a program that provides healthcare for low-income and disabled people, funding for which is shared by the federal and state governments. The new federal budget includes an estimated \$1 trillion in cuts to the program, which states will have to make up or institute drastic reductions in coverage.

The devastating results may be seen in the dire consequences for New York state and city residents.

The recently adopted New York state budget already had a \$7.5 billion deficit. This is estimated to grow to \$11 billion due to the federal cuts. Governor Kathy Hochul, a Democrat, has stated that she is adamantly opposed to raising taxes to plug the hole in the existing state budget, let alone that resulting from the federal

cuts. Medicaid and other state-sponsored health coverage for poor and disabled individuals provide healthcare support for about 44 percent of state residents.

As a result, medical care will be severely curtailed by the significant reduction in the federal share, which the state can do little or nothing to make up without either stealing funds from other programs or raising taxes, which would impinge on the wealth of the state's capitalist oligarchy. The Hochul administration estimates that due to the federal cut in funding, 1.5 million state residents will lose medical coverage. Hospital groups estimate that they will eventually lose \$8 billion in income as a result of the federal bill and 34,000 healthcare workers will lose their jobs, plus tens of thousands of other positions at local businesses and suppliers that provide support services. In addition, many residents will lose ready access to medical care, especially in more rural areas, due to the closure of medical facilities which are already sparsely distributed and highly reliant on patients with Medicaid coverage for their financial survival.

Furthermore, the cuts in Medicaid will substantially increase personal medical debt. This will drive many already in marginal economic situations into poverty and homelessness. According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, in 2023, New York state had approximately 15 percent of the nation's homeless population. In that year, there were at least 103,200 homeless people in the state. Over the following year the official total skyrocketed to 158,019. Both figures are widely acknowledged to be gross undercounts. The impending budget cuts and service reductions will drive that total to new heights.

The limitation or complete loss of medical care will be compounded by a substantial reduction in federal funding for SNAP, which provides indispensable dietary support for millions of low-income families. The New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance estimates that approximately 400,000 New Yorkers may no longer be exempt from work or other onerous requirements; three quarters of them might lose benefits entirely.

New York state is facing up to \$1.4 billion in annual SNAP cuts and cost shifts. The state would have to increase allocations by that amount to cover the shortfall by the start of fiscal year beginning in October 2027. Children will be additionally impacted by the elimination of SNAP-Ed, for which the state received \$29 million, assisting 2.2 million individuals last fiscal year.

It is estimated that, overall, 63,000 jobs will be eliminated across New York state, nearly half coming from the healthcare sector, because of the cuts to these two programs alone, not to mention the severe impact to the health and well-being of a substantial portion of the population.

The reduction in federal funding for medical and food programs will have a serious impact on New York City in particular, notably for children. It is estimated that funding cuts and changes in eligibility rules for SNAP may result in hundreds of thousands of parents losing their food benefits.

The major cuts in Medicaid and SNAP alone will further exacerbate the already catastrophic decline in child health across the country, as documented in a newly published study.

The recently adopted municipal budget for the new fiscal year will further impact the health and well-being of the city's working-class population. The budget already allocated only \$50 million for the Community Food Connection Program, half of the funds requested. The program supports a number of nonprofit organizations running more than 700 community kitchens and food pantries throughout the city on which an estimated 1.4 million residents rely.

The newly adopted, "balanced" city budget, touted as "Trump proof," is nothing of the sort since it makes no provision for these and other impacts of the new federal budget. The already sharp divide between the city's working class and its financial and corporate elite will

be driven to an explosive state as this situation develops. The victory of Zohran Mamdani in the Democratic mayoral primary expresses this conflict but also reveals the total inadequacy of Mamdani's program to address the impending catastrophe. Similar tensions exist at the state level and nationally.

All of these federal cuts to the state and city budgets and services under the Trump administration's "One Big Beautiful Bill" budget are targeted to help finance the largest transfer of wealth in history from workers, both to fund \$4.5 trillion in tax cuts for the wealthy and to fund foreign wars and domestic repression.

While put forward by the fascist Republicans, the Democrats have done nothing but voice limited, toothless protests. The nominal opposition party is nothing of the sort. As the co-representatives of the capitalist oligarchy, it is fully complicit in the devastation that is being unleashed.



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