

U.S. Representative Emily Randall (D, WA-06)

Energy and Commerce Member Day Hearing Remarks

December 12, 2025

Thank you Chairman Guthrie and Ranking Member Pallone for the opportunity to testify before the Energy and Commerce Committee today.

I'd like to start by sharing with you what drives my interest and my passion for building an equitable health care system.

My sister Olivia was born with microcephaly — a condition where her brain could not fully develop, leading to lifelong health challenges.

My dad worked a civilian job at the Department of Defense, and even with insurance, the care she needed to grow and to live for 19 years would not have been possible without one thing: **Medicaid**.

Specifically -- the Washington State Legislature's decision to expand Medicaid the very year she was born in 1993.

Olivia's journey taught me something important: when government recognizes what people need, it has the power to help them.

Her life fueled my career in public service — fighting to ensure families like mine can access the care and support that every person deserves.

I want to make one thing clear: **health care is a fundamental human right.**

No person in the richest country in the world should be denied care because of their income, their ZIP code, or their immigration status.

In the state legislature, I worked every day to protect and expand health care access, including leading Washington's efforts to extend postpartum Medicaid coverage.

Our law, like those of the many states that followed, ensures individuals can access Medicaid services for the full 12 months after their pregnancy ends, giving families stability during a critical period.

This law is a perfect example of why I'm passionate about health care policy — it's about meeting people where they are and ensuring they have the tools to keep themselves, their families, and communities healthy and thriving.

That's why I'm a strong supporter of Medicaid Expansion.

Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, states can choose to expand Medicaid, providing millions of low-income Americans access coverage.

In states that expanded Medicaid, the number of uninsured dropped dramatically, giving families peace of mind and access to preventive care.

In my state, the average monthly enrollment pre-ACA was one million, one hundred seventeen thousand, five hundred seventy-six (1,117,566).

Because of Medicaid expansion – total monthly Medicaid enrollment reached an all-time high of more than two million individuals in 2022 — a 94 percent increase.

Medicaid expansion doesn't just help individual families — it keeps entire communities afloat.

Across the country, Medicaid is the single largest payer for rural hospitals, including in my district.

When states expand Medicaid, hospitals stay open. When states don't, hospitals close – it's that simple.

But the cuts to Medicaid in the Big Ugly Law – in addition to tariffs on medical equipment and the unwillingness to extend the Affordable Care Act tax credits for those who rely on them – will severely impact rural hospitals by threatening vital services and limiting access to care.

Of my district's 5 rural hospitals, **all are facing tough decisions** about what services they can continue to provide when Republican policy makes their jobs nearly impossible.

I spoke with James from Aberdeen who shared the impacts of the Big Ugly Law on his family.

He is the primary caregiver for his wife, who is battling late stage Parkinson's, and relies on regular hospital visits and specialized care through Medicaid.

These cuts will make it nearly impossible for him to secure the care his wife needs, leaving their family facing devastating uncertainty and hardship.

I don't think any of us on either side would say that the system that we have is perfect and working exactly as it was intended to.

I do, however, have real concerns about saying it's not working, so we should cut Medicaid or not reinstate these Affordable Care Tax credits – actions that will result in millions of more Americans losing their health care and leaving the system even more broken.

What we need is fundamental reform.

We need universal health care.

We need to remove layers of profit and bureaucracy

We need a system where every person can go to the doctor, receive the care they need, and leave without worrying about whether they can afford it.

The West Coast has banded together to study and design such a system across California, Oregon, and Washington – efforts I supported by creating Washington State’s Universal Health Care Commission

These efforts show that practical, achievable steps toward universal coverage are possible and we should take similar steps at the federal level.

I am eager to work with both of you and members of the Energy and Commerce Committee on reforming and reimagining our health care system.

I would like to close by thanking Ranking Member Pallone for his steadfast leadership this year as our health care system faces existential challenges.

Your work is helping to turn the promise of health care as a human right into a reality –

and I’m grateful for your dedication to building a system that works for all of us.

I look forward to working with you to advance policies that expand access to care, protect families, and ensure that health care truly meets the needs of every person.