

Congress Must Act NOW to Make Health Coverage Affordable: Extend Enhanced Premium Tax Credits!

For over a decade, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplace has provided health coverage to individuals and families. The vast majority of enrollees rely on subsidies to make their monthly premiums affordable. **In 2025, over [135,000](#) Nebraskans are enrolled in Marketplace coverage, and over 93%¹ of them rely on subsidies to afford their coverage.**

These subsidies, called advance premium tax credits (APTCs), have existed since the Marketplace was established to lower monthly premiums for many folks based on their income level. In 2021, Congress improved the tax credits to make coverage more affordable for more people, but without immediate action, the enhanced APTCs will expire at the end of 2025 and premiums will skyrocket for Marketplace enrollees starting in 2026. [Recent polling](#) shows that **extending the enhanced APTCs is extremely popular across the political spectrum**, garnering support from 92% of Democrats, 82% of independents, and 59% of Republicans.

Nebraskans are counting on Congress to extend the enhanced APTCs. In 2024, Nebraskans enrolled in Marketplace plans at record rates, nearly all with enhanced APTCs²:

District	Representative	# of Marketplace enrollees	% of enrollees with APTCs
NE-01	Mike Flood	33,000	94%
NE-02	Don Bacon	34,000	91%
NE-03	Adrian Smith	51,000	96%

What's at Stake if the Enhanced Advance Premium Tax Credits Expire?

Nebraskans will not be able to afford the care they need. Recent estimates indicate that if the enhanced APTCs expire, enrollees' [premiums will more than double](#). Many families will not be able to afford that spike in costs and [more than 15,000 Nebraskans](#) are expected to lose Marketplace coverage as a result. Between this and the deep cuts to health care already passed through H.R. 1, which are expected to [kick 30,000 Nebraskans off Medicaid coverage](#), jumps in uninsured rates will cause health care costs to rise for all of us.

Nebraskans would face hundreds or thousands of dollars in premium cost increases. Nebraskans with the lowest incomes will be hurt the most: premiums will increase by [\\$562](#) on average for Nebraskans under 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL). Middle class families over 400% FPL (annual income of \$62,600 for individuals and \$128,600 for a family of four in 2025), who typically have no other way to access health coverage, would lose all subsidies if the enhanced APTC protections expire, including the current premium cost cap of [8.5%](#) of income. Nebraska would see one of the highest estimated jumps in premiums – a 64-year-old couple with an income of \$90,000 per year would see a [premium increase of more than \\$32,000 annually](#) if enhanced APTCs expire.

¹ Nebraska's Marketplace enrollment in 2025 is [136,684](#) and [127,135](#) rely on enhanced APTCs.

² Nicole Rapfogel, Center for American Progress, *2024 Affordable Care Act Marketplace Plan Selections by Congressional District*, May 2, 2024, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/2024-affordable-care-act-marketplace-plan-selections-by-congressional-district/>.

Marketplace enrollees are already going to see massive increases in premium costs because of cuts to health care passed in H.R.1. Early Marketplace premium estimates show insurers nationwide are proposing to increase premiums for 2026 by [18%](#), more than double the [7%](#) average increase last year. If the enhanced APTCs are not extended or made permanent, the rising costs will be even more extreme. If the subsidies do expire, the average Marketplace enrollee is expected to see their costs [more than double](#). And the premium increases will be even worse for those in rural areas - about [25% higher](#) than increases for urban enrollees. Data for Nebraska shows that the counties that would be hardest-hit if the enhanced APTCs expire are all in CD3.³

Health care providers and the Nebraska economy will suffer if the enhanced APTCs expire because of reduced revenue and increased uncompensated care. Nationwide, expiration of the enhanced APTCs would lead to numerous negative effects:

- Increases in uninsured rates - with [3.8 million becoming uninsured each year](#) - will lead to more people forgoing health services, and requiring local providers and taxpayers to absorb emergency costs;
- Health care spending would [decline](#) by:
 - \$8.2 billion for hospital services;
 - \$3.1 billion for office-based physician services;
 - \$5.6 billion for other health care services;
 - \$4.0 billion for prescription drugs;
- Uncompensated care would increase by [\\$6.3 billion](#); and
- [Small businesses and self-employed entrepreneurs](#) will be especially hard-hit as they comprise about half of adult market enrollees.

Finally, research shows that the declines in health care spending and the harms from eliminating the enhanced APTCs would be more pronounced **in rural communities, for older adults, and for groups that already face health disparities based on race.**

URGENT Congressional Action is Needed to Keep Affordability Protections

Marketplace open enrollment for the 2026 plan year begins November 1, 2025. Congress must act NOW to prevent further harm and even higher health care costs. Nebraskans call on Congress to extend or make permanent the enhanced APTCs, which are critical affordability controls for access to health care. Nebraska families, communities, and local economies cannot afford these devastating price hikes.

³ "Highest average loss of premium tax credits: McPherson County: \$2,280 more per year; Chase County: \$1,608 more per year; Hayes and Hitchcock Counties: \$1,560 more per year; Gosper and Perkins Counties: \$1,500 more per year." The Century Foundation, *Recent Changes Will Increase Health Costs and Decrease Coverage in Nebraska*, https://production-tcf.imgix.net/app/uploads/2025/08/05112717/NE_-_Premium-Tax-Credit-Fact-Sheet-July-2025.pdf.