

Dear,

The Board of Directors of Connect for Health Colorado strongly advocates for swift Congressional action to extend the enhanced premium tax credits under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As the state's official health insurance marketplace, Connect for Health Colorado is dedicated to improving access, affordability, and choice for individuals and employers purchasing health insurance. Guided by a bipartisan, public Board, which includes appointees from both legislative majorities and minorities, and the Governor, our diverse membership represents urban and rural Colorado and brings a wide range of expertise from health issuers, consumer advocates, brokers, and entrepreneurs. Despite our different backgrounds, we are united in our support for extending the enhanced premium tax credits provided by the Inflation Reduction Act.

Since the enhanced tax credits became available in 2021, they have significantly expanded access to health insurance and driven historic enrollment numbers. In 2020, prior to these enhancements, Connect for Health Colorado was covering 166,850 Coloradans. Today, we are proud to serve approximately 250,000 individuals including a 41% increase in financially assisted enrollments. This expansion has also driven a 265% increase in Gold plan enrollments, allowing Coloradans to afford more comprehensive coverage. As a result, the uninsured rate in Colorado has dropped to a record low of 4.6%, according to the [Colorado Health Access Survey](#).

However, this success is in jeopardy. The enhanced premium tax credits are set to expire at the end of 2025, posing a significant affordability challenge for Colorado consumers. Without an extension, we estimate that 77% of current enrollees will lose or see a reduction in their financial assistance, with average household net premiums potentially increasing by 50% annually. The hardest hit will be low-income Coloradans, with net premiums for those earning less than 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL) expected to rise by over 132%. Rural communities and individuals over the age of 55 will also face substantial increases, with some enrollees seeing their net premiums rise by up to 73%. For example, enrollees in Las Animas County could face an increase of \$1,476 annually in net premium costs.

If net premium costs rise significantly, many Coloradans may be forced to go without coverage. This, combined with the end of the Public Health Emergency and loss

of Medicaid coverage, may drastically increase the uninsured rate. When Coloradans go uninsured, they may forgo preventative health services, delay needed medical care, and overutilize emergency care. This would not only have negative health outcomes for individuals, but also destabilize risk pools and strain health care providers, increasing costs for everyone.

Additionally, time is of the essence because Connect for Health Colorado does significant work to prepare for Open Enrollment. This includes plan loading, updating premium tax credit calculations in IT systems, renewal notice development, and communication efforts. Without quick action, delays in these efforts will impact the Connect for Health Colorado's operations and ability to deliver access, affordability, and choice for individuals and small business owners purchasing health insurance in Colorado.

The Board of Directors of Connect for Health Colorado urges Congress to act quickly to extend the enhanced premium tax credits. Doing so will prevent sharp net premium increases, reduce the risk of higher uninsured rates, prevent operational challenges for Connect for Health Colorado, and safeguard the financial stability of both health insurance markets and providers.

Sincerely,  
The Board of Directors