

Twelve Colorado hospitals at risk of cuts, closure

Union nurses across the country, who are members of National Nurses United (NNU), have identified H.R. 1 as a massive red line crossed by the Trump administration and Republican members of Congress.

H.R. 1 threatens an already fragile health care system in Colorado. Not only are hospitals at risk of service cuts or even closure, but patients who live in this area will also face unprecedented hurdles to subsidized health care and nutrition assistance.

Coloradans in rural areas will be disproportionately hurt by these cuts, as they heavily rely on health and nutrition assistance. For example, Costilla County, a rural county and one of the poorest in Colorado, has a Medicaid enrollment rate of nearly 55 percent; moreover, 35 percent of the county's residents rely on SNAP. These cuts will further economic and health disparities between rural and urban areas in the state.

What's happening?

Financial analysis by National Nurses United (NNU) shows that 12 hospitals across the state of Colorado are extremely vulnerable to service cuts. The impacted hospitals include five operated by UCHealth alone, as well as hospitals operated by Banner Health, Intermountain Health, and CommonSpirit, some of the state's largest hospital systems.

The three largest hospitals on the list are:

1. Intermountain Health Lutheran Hospital (Lakewood)
2. Banner Health North Colorado Medical Center (Greeley)
3. UCHealth Highlands Ranch Hospital (Highlands Ranch)

In total, these hospitals receive more than 47,500 patient visits yearly and stand to lose between $51.9 million and $75.4 million annually when H.R. 1 is fully implemented.

Not only are local economies and jobs at risk, all the hospitals act as vital parts of Colorado's health care delivery system. The loss of these hospitals would mean a loss of nearly 10 percent of the state's hospital beds. Beyond the undue burden placed on residents to travel further for emergency and acute care, it is unclear how neighboring hospitals would be able to absorb the flow of incoming patients.

What is H.R. 1 and what does it have to do with Colorado's hospitals?

In its "A Preventable Crisis" report, NNU identified 600 hospitals nationwide at risk of cuts and closure once H.R. 1 health care cuts take effect, which includes 12 Colorado hospitals.

H.R. 1 is the budget bill passed by the U.S. House and Senate Republicans and signed into law by President Trump in 2025. H.R. 1's health care and safety net cuts are paying for massive tax benefits to the wealthiest households in America, militarized immigration enforcement, and endless wars.

Starting after the 2026 midterms, the bill imposes nearly $1 trillion in federal health care funding cuts. Researchers calculate that the unprecedented cuts will lead to 10 million people losing their insurance by 2034. The law also reduces spending on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) by 20 percent. By 2034, when the bill is in full effect, approximately $187 billion will be cut from the program.

What is the potential impact of service cuts or closures at the twelve Colorado hospitals identified as at risk?

Residents would be forced to travel much farther to receive emergency and acute care, and local economies would lose out on the jobs and federal funding in their communities. The largest employer of the at-risk hospitals, Intermountain Health Lutheran Hospital, employs more than 1,600 people and serves more than 11,600 patients every year. The other hospitals are smaller, but each employ hundreds of workers and serve tens of thousands of patients annually.

Residents across the state have been faced with dwindling care options for some time now, conditions that will be exacerbated by H.R. 1. Since 2020, five labor and delivery units have shuttered, all in rural areas of the state. Additionally, in 2025, Banner Health announced it was shutting the emergency room at McKee Medical Center in Loveland and transitioning from a general, acute hospital to a specialty hospital. This left the city of Loveland and surrounding areas with only one emergency room.

Closures also impact urban areas. This past summer, Intermountain Health closed three clinics in the Denver region. While a number of hospitals are expanding and a free standing emergency room did open in urban and semi-urban areas in that timeframe, no new hospitals have opened in Colorado.

How will H.R. 1 impact the health care needs for Colorado's residents?

Across Colorado, patients are expected to face increasing challenges to accessing care, especially with the expiration of ACA subsidies on top of the Medicaid and Medicare cuts. Rural residents, in Colorado and across the country, will be disproportionately harmed by H.R.1 and the cuts in Medicaid and SNAP.

Close to 1.2 million Coloradans are on Medicaid, including more than 526,000 children. It is estimated that under H.R.1 31 percent of recipients (377,000 people) will be subject to work requirements or exemption reporting, with approximately 100,000 expected to lose coverage

altogether. Additionally, projections show that up to 7,000 lawfully present immigrants will lose or have already lost coverage.

Marketplace health insurance premiums have already skyrocketed for many. Between 2025 and 2026, the premium increased by $4,953 for a family of four in Denver. In other areas, premiums increased by more than $10,000.

Colorado residents will undoubtedly be hit with a double punch as H.R. 1 is slated to cut SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) by $187 billion over the next ten years. Beginning in 2027, Colorado will now need to cover 10 percent of the cost of SNAP. More than 583,000 Coloradans (of which 50 percent are children, 10 percent are older adults, and 15 percent are individuals with disabilities) participate in SNAP and will now face greater food insecurity. This equates to 298,000 households that will either lose some or all of their SNAP coverage. Since July 2026 alone, 33,681 fewer individuals are utilizing SNAP.

Colorado is now ranked the third most expensive state in the country. Working families across the state are faced with an affordability crisis, with many already delaying medical and dental care. The cuts from H.R.1 will exacerbate this situation, putting thousands more at financial and health risk – threatening the wellbeing of these individuals, their communities, their counties, and the state.