

Michigan Dems Celebrate Laws Improving Health and Wellness for Michiganders

Landmark legislation protects health care coverage, lowers costs and promotes wellness



State Rep. Julie Rogers (D-Kalamazoo) speaks in support of the Affordable Care Act codification bill package on Oct. 10, 2023, on the House floor of the Michigan Capitol.

LANSING, Mich., Feb. 9, 2024 — For the first time in 40 years, Democrats gained control of the Legislature and the governor's office last year — with majority, they led a remarkably productive year, passing and signing into law a historic number of bills. A significant number of those laws go into effect on Feb. 13. In order to celebrate with and inform Michiganders, Dems are

rolling out the Countdown to a Better Michigan project — each day leading up to Feb. 13, they are sharing about a different set of legislation soon becoming law. Included are laws to protect the health and wellbeing of residents — Michigan Dems know how important these priorities are to Michiganders, which is why they delivered on what really matters to residents.

Due to a variety of politically driven federal court cases aimed at striking down parts or all of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), Michigan House Dems worked hard to enshrine health care protections into state law. These provisions include protecting the expansion of Medicaid, coverage for those with preexisting conditions, allowing young adults to stay on their parents' plan until they turn 26 and banning lifetime caps on coverage.

“As a practicing health care provider, I am thrilled that all eight of the bills in the Affordable Care Act package have been signed into law by the governor,” said **state Rep. Julie M. Rogers** (D-Kalamazoo), chair of the House Health Policy Committee. “Preserving access to care and insurance by safeguarding some of the most important consumer protections of the ACA will save lives. Prohibiting discrimination in insurance coverage and health care based on an individual’s gender and sexual orientation, ensuring children can remain on their parents’ health insurance until age 26, and prohibiting discrimination in rates or coverage based on preexisting medical conditions are just some of the vital provisions now protected by state law. This life-saving legislation benefits all Michiganders by ensuring they continue to have access to the insurance they have come to rely on.”

Addressing the social determinants of health is vitally important — House Dems have taken actionable steps in the most recent state budget to address

this. The lawmakers improved access to food by reducing the administrative burden for those who benefit from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Additionally, they passed “filter first” bills, providing \$50 million for child care centers and pre-K to have clean water. The budget also included \$150 million for electric school buses which reduce diesel fume inhalation by bus riders. House Dems will continue to prioritize making smart investments in health and wellness this coming budget year.

“Introducing and supporting legislation that promotes Michiganders’ health and wellbeing is a top priority of mine. I sponsored bills that will help ensure the safety of our kids, families, and seniors, from updating car seat safety regulations to lowering prescription drug costs. We must continue our work,” said **the state Rep. Carrie A. Rheingans** (D-Ann Arbor).

Managing mental health is as important as managing physical health, but too many Michiganders lack access to vital resources. House Dems understand the necessity of investing in quality mental health care to expand access to all. One of the top Dem in 2023 was to support the mental health of Michigan’s young people. Legislation passed includes banning both child marriage and conversion therapy. Democrats also passed laws meant to keep guns out of the hands of teenagers in an effort to reduce teen suicide rates. Future efforts include mental health care parity, ensuring a minimum number of school counselors and increasing funding for behavioral health clinics.

“Too often, mental health is discussed but not supported. House Dems are prioritizing mental health to make care more accessible for all,” said **state Rep. Kimberly Edwards** (D-Eastpointe). “From funding mental health initiatives in K-12 schools and investing in existing infrastructure for behavioral health clinics, to introducing legislation to help social workers enter and remain in the field, we’re putting our money where our values are.

We've taken meaningful steps, and we'll keep working to ensure Michiganders in every corner of our state can get the mental health resources they need."

"House Democrats have taken bold action on one of the issues that matter most to Michigan residents, which is protecting and expanding access to health care," said **Jamie Brown, RN**, president of the Michigan Nurses Association, the largest union and professional association for registered nurses and health care professionals in the state. "It's great to see health care policies in place that put people — not the insurance industry or pharmaceutical companies — first. Michigan residents need and deserve more of this kind of action from our elected officials."

The Countdown to a Better Michigan project marks the implementation of numerous laws going into effect on Feb. 13. With a strong focus on health and wellness, these laws underscore a commitment to Michiganders' well-being. Enshrining the Affordable Care Act into law, safeguarding Medicaid, and investing in health and wellness will all move Michigan forward. For detailed information on these transformative policies, please go to [this page](#). Together, let's celebrate a healthier, more resilient Michigan.

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