

Making it harder on our children is not the answer

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To the Editor:

Congressional Republicans, supported by our Congresswoman Claudia Tenney, have proposals to cut social safety nets under the false notion that this will decrease our federal debt. This is the classic Conservative trope, which has never been helpful to our society. Although their plan goes much deeper than just Medicaid and SNAP (nutrition support for children and families), I will discuss these to show the harm of these proposals to our own communities.

For many years, I was the physician for 60% of the Wayne County population living in poverty. I helped many obtain services for their families, but it was a rare person who was abusing the system of healthcare and food stamps. Lack of transportation in rural areas, decent-paying jobs, and job training are just some of the barriers that make it difficult for many residents in the 24th District to support their families.

We know that proposed cuts to Medicaid by either block grants or work requirements would only affect less than 5% of the federal budget (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Health and Human Services). We also know that when increased nutritional services were available during covid, the poverty rate of our children dropped from 50% to 20%, and their health improved. It is obvious that children with adequate nutrition are healthier and do better in school.

We cannot let Congress do harm to our neighbors and especially to our children. Making it harder for children to receive healthcare and nutrition will only have long-term negative consequences.

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Dr. Ghertner's letter to the editor originally appeared in [New York's Finger Lake Times](#) on May 12, 2023.