The U.S. House of Representatives just passed a massive bill that puts our patients and hospitals at risk by slashing funding for Medicaid, which supports 72 million people, including new moms, children with special needs, veterans, workers with low wages, and retirees.

Overall, the legislation will kick at least 9.5 million people off of their healthcare coverage and allow another 4.2 million to lose coverage at the end of this year. The bill includes reporting requirements that would likely strip coverage from hundreds of thousands of children, cost up to 449,000 jobs, and lead to more than 15,400 avoidable deaths each year.

As a healthcare professional, I have seen firsthand the crucial benefits that Medicaid provides to families. As a member of a healthcare union, I can say without hesitation that the staffing challenges and workplace violence my colleagues and I are exposed to will only get worse if the Senate approves these cuts to Medicaid.

I also know how important hospitals are to every member of a community. Medicaid provides 19 percent of hospital payments; closures and service reductions will only increase if cuts to this program occur. Medicaid also helps to fund school-based health professionals who support all students and ensures that students with disabilities get the support they need to achieve their academic potential.

Medicaid provides more than half of federal funding to states. Cuts to this program will force our state to make cuts to education, libraries and other public services, or to raise taxes. I urge our senators to speak up for their constituents and vote against this budget reconciliation bill.