

Klobuchar

FOR GOVERNOR

Make Health Care More Affordable and Accessible

Amy Klobuchar has long fought to make health care more affordable and accessible. She got involved in politics after the birth of her and John's daughter, Abigail, who couldn't swallow when she was born. Even though Abigail was in intensive care, Klobuchar was discharged from the hospital after just 24 hours because of insurance rules. As a mom who had never held political office, she became the leading advocate for the successful passage of one of the first laws in the country guaranteeing 48-hour hospital stays for new moms and their babies.

Amy Klobuchar has been taking on unfair and costly health care practices ever since. As our U.S. Senator, she led the law that ended the nearly 20-year sweetheart deal that banned Medicare from negotiating lower prescription drug prices – a ban that raised prices at the expense of seniors and taxpayers. That provision has been used by both the Biden and Trump administrations to negotiate lower prescription drug prices, which is estimated to save \$12 billion for Medicare beneficiaries and the government. She's also fought the anti-competitive practices that keep affordable generics off pharmacy shelves, passed landmark bipartisan laws to combat the opioid epidemic, and taken on insurance companies over the paperwork games that delay care. She voted for the Affordable Care Act and supported the public option as well as the premium tax credits. And she secured federal research investments that fuel our hospitals and universities while leading the successful fight to repeal the medical device tax that threatened thousands of Minnesota jobs.

Klobuchar is one of the leaders in the Senate who has taken on the Trump administration's recent cuts to health care. Because of the administration's actions, what families pay for health insurance on the individual market is projected to more than double and more than 6 million Americans have already lost their insurance, with more national Medicaid cuts coming next year. These actions threaten to close hundreds of rural hospitals, community health centers, and nursing homes across the country.

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As Governor, Amy Klobuchar will keep fighting to lower health care costs so families can afford to get the care they need. She'll work to negotiate lower prescription drug prices. She'll hold companies accountable and ensure what they charge actually reflects the cost of care. She'll improve access to care by strengthening hospitals and clinics, especially in rural areas, expanding our health care workforce, and modernizing IT systems. She will always protect a woman's right to make her own health care decisions.

Minnesota is an international hub for innovative care, cures, and medical technology. Klobuchar will expand on and strengthen our state's medical innovation. She'll partner with our world-class hospitals and research institutions to advance the future of medicine in Minnesota, build a statewide innovation network that turns discoveries into companies and jobs, drive medical innovation that increases competition and expands patient choice, and prepare our workforce for the health care careers of the future.

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1. Lower Health Care Costs

Across the country, including in Minnesota, families are facing rising health insurance premiums because of the Trump administration's refusal to extend the health care tax credits, with out-of-pocket premiums increasing 58% nationally on the individual market last year. Deductibles have risen even more, and prescription drug prices continue to skyrocket. Instead of lowering costs, the Trump administration just made the largest health care cuts in American history, causing millions of Americans to lose their coverage.

As our U.S. Senator, Amy Klobuchar has fought to lower health care costs by leading the fight for the law that finally allowed Medicare to negotiate lower prescription drug prices, and fighting anti-competitive practices that keep affordable generics off pharmacy shelves and raise prices for prescription drugs. As Governor, she will build on that work to lower prescription drug costs by expanding state bulk purchasing of drugs and prioritizing lower-cost generics and biosimilars. Klobuchar will also bring down premiums, strengthen reinsurance to hold down premiums, support small businesses in covering their employees, and help Minnesotans without employer coverage afford insurance.

As Governor, Amy Klobuchar will also take on the complicated and outdated systems that are driving up costs, making it difficult to access care, and creating opportunities for fraud. She will have zero tolerance for Medicaid fraud and will root it out and stop it before it starts. She'll make it easier to access care by simplifying forms for billing, insurance, hospital assistance, and prior authorizations, and launch a "What's it Cost?" tool to bring more transparency to the cost of medical care so families can compare the cost of procedures before they set foot in a clinic, helping lower premiums in the process. And she will work to rein in corporate health care costs by ensuring pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) pass along savings – no more hidden markups, and no more pocketing rebates that belong to consumers.

Reduce health care premiums.

- **Reduce premiums to deliver immediate cost relief and value for Minnesota families,** small business owners, farmers, contractors, and others without employer coverage. Many Americans have not been able to afford their health insurance since the Trump administration let the premium tax credit expire. To limit increases in Minnesota, Klobuchar will direct the Minnesota Department of Commerce to weigh affordability as a factor in the rate review process and deny excessive hikes. She'll also extend and strengthen Minnesota's bipartisan reinsurance program, which for nearly a decade has helped Minnesotans who purchase their own insurance, by securing renewal of the waiver before it expires at the end of 2027.

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- **Lower premiums on MNsure.** When the Trump administration let the enhanced premium tax credit expire, families' costs jumped overnight, and Americans buying their own insurance were hit hard. As Governor, Klobuchar will continue advocating for an extension of the federal premium tax credits and, if there is no federal action, she will work to create a state tax credit, delivered through MNsure, targeted at the small business owners, self-employed workers, and farmers hit hardest, helping the tens of thousands of Minnesotans who get their insurance through the individual market. This builds on the success of the ten states already running tax credits like this, including New Mexico, which acted last year and as a result was the only state where more people got covered through the marketplace, instead of people losing their coverage.
- **Give small businesses a tax credit to help cover their employees' health insurance.** Small businesses want to do right by their workers but are being priced out of offering coverage. As Governor, Klobuchar will create a per-employee state tax credit for small employers who fund their workers' health coverage, so Main Street can compete with big companies for talent without going broke doing it.

Increase transparency and reform government.

- **Launch a "What's it Cost?" tool** so families can see the price of care before they get it. Klobuchar's administration will launch a tool so families can compare the cost of procedures – like an MRI, a surgery, or childbirth – before they ever set foot in a clinic, the same way they shop for any other service.
- **Simplify paperwork by promoting a "One-Form" system for health insurance.** Klobuchar will modernize the health care system by moving toward a "one-form" standard for billing, insurance, hospital assistance, and prior authorizations. She will require insurers and providers to use a standardized format to eliminate the redundant paperwork shuffle between patients, providers, and insurance companies, so doctors spend more time with patients and patients stop facing weeks of delay and months of confusion over medical bills. Read Klobuchar's full plan to transform state government at AmyKlobuchar.com/accountable.
- **Zero tolerance for health care fraud – root it out and stop fraud before it starts.** Klobuchar will transform state government across health programs so every health care dollar goes to care, not to services not delivered. Her administration will screen providers before they receive funding against a state "Do Not Pay" database; freeze suspicious payments before money goes out the door; prosecute fraud to the fullest extent of the law; use modern payment systems to catch billing anomalies in real time; and implement the recently passed bipartisan legislation to stand up the independent Office of Inspector General. Read Klobuchar's full plan to transform state government at AmyKlobuchar.com/accountable.

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Lower prescription drug costs.

- **Expand state bulk purchasing of prescription drugs.** Building on Klobuchar's Senate leadership that finally removed the Big Pharma sweetheart deal and allowed Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices, she will use the full authority of the executive branch to expand Minnesota's bulk-purchasing of prescription drugs. Her administration will harness the Minnesota Multistate Contracting Alliance for Pharmacy (MMCAP), the largest multistate public purchasing pool in the nation, to consolidate pharmaceutical buying across state agencies and programs, and align any state employee plans alongside it.
- **Make lower-cost generics and biosimilars more available.** Building on Klobuchar's work in the Senate to expand competition through generics and biosimilars, she will make lower-cost alternatives automatically available for prescription drugs across state programs as well as other lower-cost options and referrals for consumers.
- **Convene a Minnesota employer purchasing coalition.** Klobuchar will convene a coalition of large public and private Minnesota employers to align on purchasing high-cost drugs, share strategies for fair contracting with PBMs and other industry middlemen, and accelerate use of lower-cost equivalent drugs. She will help Minnesota employers work together to negotiate fair prices from national PBMs.
- **End predatory practices by pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).** Klobuchar will end practices that don't pass along savings from discounts and conduct that steers patients to PBM-owned pharmacies, raising costs for Minnesotans.

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2. Protect Access to Care

Several hospitals and clinics across Minnesota – many of them in rural areas – are at heightened risk of closing or reducing services due in part to the Trump administration’s national Medicaid cuts in the Big Beautiful Bill. After these cuts fully kick in, more than 140,000 Minnesotans could lose their health coverage.

Amy Klobuchar led the fight against these federal cuts in the Senate and will protect access to health care as Governor, both by advocating for funding and by supporting hospitals and clinics in modernizing facilities and upgrading infrastructure. And she’ll provide support for Minnesotans who qualify for Medicaid so red tape and paperwork don’t take away their coverage, while modernizing the health systems Minnesotans rely on so applying for and keeping coverage is streamlined and seamless.

Klobuchar will also stand up for reproductive freedom, expand access to mental health services, and provide resources for addiction.

Protect coverage from federal cuts and improve the health care system.

- **Strengthen safety net and rural health care – hospitals, clinics, EMS, and pharmacies – and help Minnesotans retain coverage.** Klobuchar will keep care close to home both in the Metro and in Greater Minnesota by supporting the hospitals and clinics families rely on. She will provide targeted grants to modernize facilities and upgrade aging infrastructure, protect the 340B discounts that keep rural and safety net hospitals open, and provide funding for rural emergency medical services – including for rapid-response emergency vehicles statewide so help comes fast, no matter your ZIP code. She will advocate for restoring the Medicaid funding cuts in the Big Beautiful Bill and use every available data source to make sure Minnesotans retain coverage.
- **Modernize the systems Minnesotans rely on.** Klobuchar will modernize government technology to deliver results faster. That includes completing the state health insurance portal upgrades, expanding data-driven automatic renewals, and moving toward one-stop enrollment, so applying for and keeping coverage is streamlined and seamless. Read Klobuchar’s full plan to transform state government at AmyKlobuchar.com/accountable.

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Protect access to care.

- **Put primary care first.** Everyone does better, and the whole system costs less, when Minnesotans have a regular primary care provider – whether that’s a doctor, registered nurse, clinician, community health worker, social worker, or pharmacist – who knows them, catches problems early, and coordinates their care. As Governor, Klobuchar will make primary care the foundation of Minnesota health care. She will continue rewarding providers for getting and keeping people healthy from the start, rather than waiting for an emergency.
- **Expand telehealth services.** Klobuchar will guarantee that care delivered by telehealth is covered and paid at the same rate as in-person care, for all services and all plans, and make coverage of audio-only visits permanent, so seniors and rural Minnesotans without reliable broadband aren’t left behind. Building on her leadership on broadband in the Senate, she will finish the job on universal broadband and a stronger statewide digital health framework so residents in every ZIP code can see specialists from home.
- **Support our veterans’ health care.** Klobuchar will work with federal authorities and County Veterans Service Officers to cut through red tape and make sure Minnesota veterans can access the full Veteran Affairs (VA) health care and mental health services they’ve earned. Her administration will also join the VA’s Governor’s Challenge to strengthen veteran suicide prevention across the state.
- **Expand mental health access across Minnesota.** Klobuchar will work to restore and expand the school-linked mental health grants so kids and their parents can get help in school. She will build the mental health workforce, including dedicated rural mental health counselors and social workers. Her goal will be to add psychiatric bed capacity, with a specific focus on kids, building on the 2025 bonding investment. She will direct the Commerce Department to enforce equal coverage for mental and physical health, so insurance covers mental health and addiction care like the health care it is. And she will work to fully fund Minnesota’s mobile crisis response so that in a mental health emergency, help comes where it is needed.
- **Build and expand on Minnesota’s leading work on addiction.** Building on Klobuchar’s work as county attorney and in the Senate, she will expand access to evidence-based drug and alcohol treatment and prevention. As U.S. Senator and as Hennepin County Attorney, she has long supported drug courts, as well as therapies, treatment, prevention, and research into new and effective treatment options. She will ensure every opioid settlement dollar is used for treatment and prevention, expand rural treatment capacity, and partner with counties, towns, and Tribal Nations.
- **Protect reproductive freedom.** Klobuchar will protect the reproductive rights codified in state law by the *PRO Act*.

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3. Support Medical Innovation and Our Health Care Workforce

Minnesota does big things – and nowhere is that more true than in medicine. We are home to leading hospitals, world-class research universities, and one of the largest medical technology hubs in the world. Minnesota has always been where the future of medicine is built – from the first successful open-heart surgery at the University of Minnesota to the first wearable battery-powered pacemaker, and from pioneering work in personalized medicine and mapping the human genome at the Mayo Clinic and other health institutions to the breakthroughs being developed in our labs today. But other states and countries are competing aggressively for the jobs, research dollars, and talent that Minnesota has long led on, and we can't take that leadership for granted.

In the Senate, Amy Klobuchar led the successful fight to repeal the medical device tax that threatened thousands of Minnesota medtech jobs, and she has championed the federal research investments that fuel our hospitals and universities. She has fought recent Trump administration cuts to National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding and research grants, which have put cancer trials and cures at risk. As Governor, she will partner with our world-class hospitals and research institutions to keep building the future of medicine here in Minnesota, create a statewide innovation network that turns discoveries into companies and jobs, drive medical innovation that increases competition and expands patient choice, and prepare our workforce for the health care careers of the future.

Klobuchar also knows we need to expand our health care workforce, including doctors, nurses, clinicians, medical technicians, pharmacists, dental hygienists and dentists, so Minnesotans don't have to drive two hours or wait two months to get care. She'll do this by recruiting and training medical professionals, expanding health care pipelines, and supporting primary care providers. Klobuchar's full plan to recruit, train, and retain Minnesota's workforce, including the health care sector, is available at AmyKlobuchar.com/workforce.

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Support Minnesota's medical innovation.

- **Build on and expand Minnesota's role in the next generation of treatment and cures**, including our long support of research, the mapping of the human genome, and responsible use of technology. The Trump administration has cut NIH funding and canceled research grants, putting cancer trials and cures at risk. Klobuchar will incentivize and expand partnerships with research institutions, companies, philanthropies, and universities to develop groundbreaking cures. This means keeping world-class research, clinical trials, and the jobs that come with them here in Minnesota, with a dedicated commitment to diseases including cancer, Alzheimer's, and historically under-emphasized women's health research, from mammograms to menopause.
- **Launch a Minnesota Innovation Network.** Minnesota's next generation of cures and treatments will come from connecting researchers, entrepreneurs, and health systems, so a discovery made in a Rochester or Twin Cities lab or a rural startup becomes a treatment, a company, and Minnesota jobs. As Governor, Klobuchar will build a coordinated statewide system that connects Minnesota businesses to universities, research centers, and incubators with local innovation hubs focused on health care along with advanced manufacturing, energy, and agriculture. Klobuchar's administration will pool resources and use public-private financing to bring new treatments from the lab to the market faster and connect innovators with employers.

Support Minnesota's health care workforce.

- **Launch Minnesota Health Care Future to expand our health care workforce.** Minnesota must recruit and train doctors, nurses, and medical technicians. Klobuchar's administration will work with the University of Minnesota and the state college system, as well as Minnesota employers and unions, to develop specialized recruitment campaigns and training pathways to encourage medical professionals to live and work in the Minnesota communities that need them most. One of many examples is the University of Minnesota's NXT GEN MED three-year degree program in Rochester.
- **Expand health care pipelines.** Klobuchar's administration will work to waive initial application fees for nurses, doctors, and med techs. Klobuchar will work to expand alternative pathways and streamline credentialing so graduates in other fields can transition into classrooms and clinics.
- **Strengthen registered apprenticeships to additional industries like biotech and health care.** Klobuchar is committed to working with the private and public sectors, as well as unions, to add 10,000 apprenticeship and skills training opportunities, including for health care workers. Building on the success of apprenticeships in the trades, she will bring the Minnesota Apprenticeship Initiative to additional industries like health care and biotech. She will work with employers and schools to connect high school students directly to emerging and high-demand careers such as nursing.

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- **Expand the primary care and maternal care workforce.** Klobuchar will work with employers and schools to train and recruit the primary care providers Minnesota needs – including family doctors, nurses, dentists, and community health workers – with a focus on the communities that have gone without them, so that seeing a primary care provider doesn't mean a three-month wait or a three-hour drive. Our state should expand access to OB-GYNs, midwives, and other maternal health providers, and work to end the disparities that leave Black mothers roughly three times, and Native mothers more than four times, as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes.
- **Create partnerships between local employers, community colleges, and public and private colleges and universities, and advance Minnesota's STEM education.** Klobuchar will create partnerships between community colleges and local employers who are competing in the global economy to design curricula and credentials for high-demand jobs that exist right now, in fields such as health care, so training aligns directly with local hiring needs. She will work with our world-class tech and medical industries to expand science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, with mentorships, internships, and curriculum aligned to the jobs being created in Minnesota.

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References

Elements of this plan are contained in legislation introduced by Minnesota legislators of both parties, including:

- **Lower Health Care Costs:** *Sen. Liz Boldon (DFL–Rochester), Sen. Julia Coleman (R–Waconia), Sen. Gary Dahms (R–Redwood Falls), Sen. Zach Duckworth (R–Lakeville), Sen. Amanda Hemmingsen-Jaeger (DFL–Woodbury), Sen. Karin Housley (R–Stillwater), Sen. Matt Klein (DFL–Inver Grove Heights), Sen. Alice Mann (DFL–Edina), Sen. John Marty (DFL–Roseville), Sen. Paul Utke (R–Park Rapids), Sen. Melissa Wiklund (DFL–Bloomington), Rep. Patty Acomb (DFL–Minnetonka), Rep. Esther Agbaje (DFL–Minneapolis), Rep. Kristin Bahner (DFL–Maple Grove), Rep. Robert Bierman (DFL–Apple Valley), Rep. Steve Elkins (DFL–Bloomington), Rep. Peter Fischer (DFL–Maplewood), Rep. Jessica Hanson (DFL–Burnsville), Rep. Bobbie Harder (R–Henderson), Rep. Kim Hicks (DFL–Rochester), Rep. John Huot (DFL–Rosemount), Rep. Danny Nadeau (R–Rogers), Rep. Mohamud Noor (DFL–Minneapolis), Rep. Matt Norris (DFL–Blaine), Rep. Tim O’Driscoll (R–Sartell), Rep. Liz Reyer (DFL–Eagan), Rep. Zack Stephenson (DFL–Coon Rapids), Rep. Chris Swedzinski (R–Ghent).*
- **Protect Access to Care:** *Sen. Liz Boldon (DFL–Rochester), Sen. Julia Coleman (R–Waconia); Sen. Gary Dahms (R–Redwood Falls), Sen. Zach Duckworth (R–Lakeville); Sen. Omar Fateh (DFL–Minneapolis), Sen. Robert Farnsworth (R–Hibbing), Sen. Grant Hauschild (DFL–Hermantown), Sen. John Hoffman (DFL–Brooklyn Park), Sen. Matt Klein (DFL–Inver Grove Heights), Sen. Michael Kreun (R–Blaine), Sen. Robert Kupec (DFL–Moorhead), Sen. Andrew Lang (R–Willmar), Sen. Bill Lieske (R–Farmington), Sen. Alice Mann (DFL–Edina), Sen. Erin Maye Quade (DFL–Apple Valley), Sen. Jordan Rasmusson (R–Fergus Falls), Sen. Paul Utke (R–Park Rapids), Sen. Melissa Wiklund (DFL–Bloomington), Sen. Tou Xiong (DFL–Maplewood), Rep. Paul Anderson (R–Starbuck), Rep. Jeff Backer (R–Browns Valley), Rep. Dave Baker (R–Willmar), Rep. Peggy Bennett (R–Albert Lea), Rep. Robert Bierman (DFL–Apple Valley), Rep. Ned Carroll (DFL–Plymouth), Rep. Mary Frances Clardy (DFL–Inver Grove Heights), Rep. Greg Davids (R–Preston), Rep. Alex Falconer (DFL–Eden Prairie), Rep. Steve Gander (R–East Grand Forks), Rep. Julie Greene (DFL–Edina), Rep. Kim Hicks (DFL–Rochester), Rep. Pete Johnson (DFL–Duluth), Rep. Sydney Jordan (DFL–Minneapolis), Rep. Heather Keeler (DFL–Moorhead), Rep. Krista Knudsen (R–Lake Shore), Rep. Erin Koegel (DFL–Spring Lake Park), Rep. Larry Kraft (DFL–St. Louis Park), Rep. Ron Kresha (R–Little Falls), Rep. Tina Liebling (DFL–Rochester), Rep. Anquam Mahamoud (DFL–Minneapolis), Rep. Kelly Moller (DFL–Shoreview), Rep. Mohamud Noor (DFL–Minneapolis), Rep. Matt Norris (DFL–Blaine), Rep. Maria Isa Pérez-Vega (DFL–St. Paul), Rep. Kristi Pursell (DFL–Northfield), Rep. Kari Rehrauer (DFL–Coon Rapids), Rep. Aaron Repinski (R–Winona), Rep. Liz Reyer (DFL–Eagan), Rep. Roger Skraba (R–Ely), Rep. Chris Swedzinski (R–Ghent), Rep. Paul Torkelson (R–Hanska), Rep. Bianca Virnig (DFL–Eagan), Rep. Cal Warwas (R–Clinton Township), Rep. Cheryl Youakim (DFL–Hopkins), Rep. Natalie Zeleznikar (R–Fredenberg Township).*

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References (continued)

- **Support Medical Innovation and Our Health Care Workforce:** *Sen. Julia Coleman (R–Waconia), Sen. Rich Draheim (R–Fairmont), Sen. Heather Gustafson (DFL–Vadnais Heights), Sen. Jennifer McEwen (DFL–Duluth), Sen. Susan Pha (DFL–Brooklyn Park), Sen. Judy Seeberger (DFL–Afton), Sen. Paul Utke (R–Park Rapids), Rep. Dave Baker (R–Willmar), Rep. Robert Bierman (DFL–Apple Valley), Rep. Samakab Hussein (DFL–St. Paul).*

Other elements of this plan draw on Senator Klobuchar’s legislative record on health care costs, workforce, access, and rural care. On prescription drugs, her *Empowering Medicare Seniors to Negotiate Drug Prices Act* shaped the 2022 law authorizing Medicare to negotiate drug prices, while her *CREATES Act*, *Reducing Drug Waste Act*, *Preserve Access to Affordable Generics and Biosimilars Act*, *Stop STALLING Act*, and *SMART Prices Act* target anticompetitive practices, eliminate waste, and expand Medicare negotiation. On addiction, her *STOP Act*, *FEND OFF Fentanyl Act*, and *Eliminating Kickbacks in Recovery Act* became law in 2018 to curb synthetic opioid shipments, target cartels, and combat treatment fraud, and she introduced the *Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act 2.0* in 2018 to increase access to prevention, treatment, and recovery support services. On rural health, she has led bipartisan bills including the *CHRONIC Care Act*, the *Rural Emergency Acute Care Hospital Act*, the *Increasing Access to Quality Cardiac Rehabilitation Act*, the *Critical Access Hospital Relief Act*, the *Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act*, and the *Rural Health Care Connectivity Act*, and cosponsored the *Protecting Access to Rural Therapy Services Act*.