



We are happy to bring back The Real Deal, our weekly newsletter prepared by the Realities of Single Payer campaign. It is intended to keep coalition members informed about single payer, the New York Health Act, and related health care news and legislative developments in the state.

[Subscribe](#)

What's Inside

- The State of New York State
- Canada's Single Payer System
- Coalition Member Spotlight
- New York Health Act Bill Tracker
- Single Payer in the News
- Ways to Get Involved
- Growing the Coalition
- Realities Resources

The State of New York State



Governor Andrew Cuomo will present his 2021-22 State Budget today at 11:30AM from the Red Room of the State Capitol.

Last week, he delivered his four-part [2021 State of the State](#) address. He did not focus much on the big ticket items like health care and education, but we can expect more substance to come with his budget unveiling.

Some of the health care-related proposals he did mention include:

- Eliminating Health Care Premiums for Low-Income New Yorkers
 - Eliminate premiums under the Essential Plan for 400,000 low-income residents
 - Enroll 100,000 residents who are currently uninsured
- Comprehensive Telehealth Legislation
 - Adjust reimbursement rates for telehealth appointments
 - Remove location requirements and other regulations
 - Additional incentives for utilizing telehealth

It is worth noting that during his State of the State address, he highlighted the fact that more than 95% of New Yorkers have health insurance coverage.

The Governor's COVID-related proposals include:

- Passing the Medical Supplies Act
- New York State Public Health Corps
- Free Citizen Public Health Training
- Ensuring Social and Racial Justice for the Vaccination Effort
- Fight for Overdue Federal Support to States Fighting COVID-19

President-elect Joe Biden announced his [\\$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief plan](#) which would set aside direct aid for state and local governments.

Governor Cuomo meanwhile is asking for \$15 billion in direct aid from the federal government. Without help from a pandemic stimulus measure, the Governor is warning that tax hikes, spending cuts and borrowing will be necessary in order to close the State's multi-billion budget gap, which the

Division of Budget estimates is \$15 billion in this fiscal year and an additional \$16 billion in the following year, which begins on April 1, 2021.

Canada's Single Payer System

Supporters of the New York Health Act hold up Canada's single payer system as a system New York should model itself after. However, we know that the Canadian system has major flaws.

A recent webinar titled "Understanding Canada's Single Payer Health Care System" laid out those issues in detail. The presentation was given by Bacchus Barua and Steven Globerman. They are from Canada's independent think-tank, Fraser Institute, known for its annual "[Waiting Your Turn](#)" report.

The two men explained how despite being one of the highest spenders of health care, Canada's government-run system ranks near the bottom in terms of performance. Also, the country's problem of long wait times for necessary care has only gotten worse over the years.

Learn more from the Fraser Institute [here](#).

DID YOU
KNOW?

Canada is one of the **highest spenders** of health care among countries with universal systems but **ranks near the bottom** in terms of performance.



Canada's health care spending as a share of GDP **ranked second highest out of 28 wealthy countries** with universal health care systems, *however...*



Canada ranks **26th** for the number of doctors.

(2.8 per 1,000 people)



Canada ranks **25th** for the number of hospital beds.

(2.1 per 1,000 people)



The median wait time for medically necessary treatment in Canada is

154 days.

Source: *Comparing Performance of Universal Health Care Countries, 2020, Fraser Institute*

NEW YORKERS DON'T WANT LOWER QUALITY HEALTH CARE AND LONGER WAIT TIMES.

Visit realitiesofsinglepayer.com to learn more.

Coalition Member Spotlight

Unshackle Upstate

Who You Are: Justin Wilcox serves as the Executive Director of Unshackle Upstate

Background: Justin is a former small business owner who has extensive experience in state and local government. He has been a Monroe County legislator since 2011, however, his work in the New York State Legislature began two decades



ago when he was hired as a Legislative Aide to former state Senator Richard Dollinger. Since then, he has served as Legislative Director to former Senator Ted O'Brien, and former Assemblymembers Joe Morelle and Jamie Romeo.

Prior to working in government, Justin was the owner of a small roofing business that he started in the early 1990s. Justin earned his associate degree from Monroe Community College in 1995 and a bachelor's degree in political science from the University at Buffalo in 2001. He is a 25-year resident of Brighton, New York where he lives with his wife, Linda and their two children, Evelyn and Brennan.

Top Issues for 2021:

As the executive director of Unshackle Upstate, Justin advocates for a better business climate for employers and a decreased tax burden for residents across Upstate New York. With continuing loss of population and business closures due to Covid, Unshackle Upstate believes that Albany must take immediate action to rebuild our economy and revive our communities.

Why You Joined Realities:

Justin supports the work being done by the Realities of Single Payer coalition because educating the public about the pitfalls of the New York Health Act is incredibly important. Having worked on health insurance issues in the Assembly for years, Justin knows understanding the complexities of our health care system, let alone how a single payer system would work, is very challenging.

For example, there are federal laws around ERISA plans and questions about the legality of how New York could address them in the New York Health Act. These federal plans are likely off limits and adjusting for that fact would drive the sky-high costs of the New York Health Act even higher. Additionally, the potential loss of 150,000 jobs would be a death blow to New York's struggling economy. Combine these issues with the \$250 billion in new taxes that would be required to fund a single payer system and it's clear that this plan would be a total catastrophe.

Unshackle Upstate is proud to support this coalition as it continues its efforts to educate the public about the true costs of single payer.

Website: unshackleupstate.com

New York Health Act Bill Tracker



[\(A.5248A/S.3577A\)](#)

The New York Health Act has not yet been reintroduced in the Senate or Assembly.

In case you missed it last week, here are the [amendments](#) that were made to the bill last year.

A reminder that while the legislation did not move last year, it enjoyed sponsorship by a comfortable majority of Assembly Democrats and was just one sponsor shy of the 32 Senators needed for passage in the Senate. With many of the newly elected legislators publicly endorsing the New York Health Act, we will need to continue to be vigilant in our efforts to defeat the legislation. We will know more once the legislation is reintroduced.

Single Payer in the News

There has not been much discussion of single payer health care in the news lately. In federal news in the past week, the press has started looking more closely at the incoming Biden administration. While President-elect Joe Biden has been opposed to a Medicare for All system and focused more on expanding the Affordable Care Act, his pick for Secretary of Health and Human Services has long supported Medicare for All proposals.

[Opinion: Biden Officials Threaten to Jumpstart Single Payer Health Care Systems](#)

The Detroit News

[Is Medicare for All a Possibility Under Xavier Becerra?](#)

Forbes

[Joe Biden to Shore Up Affordable Care Act After Trump Assault on Health Law](#)

ABC News

Ways to Get Involved

Despite the challenges the State faces due to COVID-19, sponsors of the New York Health Act along with advocates will still be pushing for passage of the bill in 2021. We will be looking at several ways to engage on the issue this year.

In the meantime, these are some options for getting involved right now. If you are interested in any of the following, please [let us know](#).

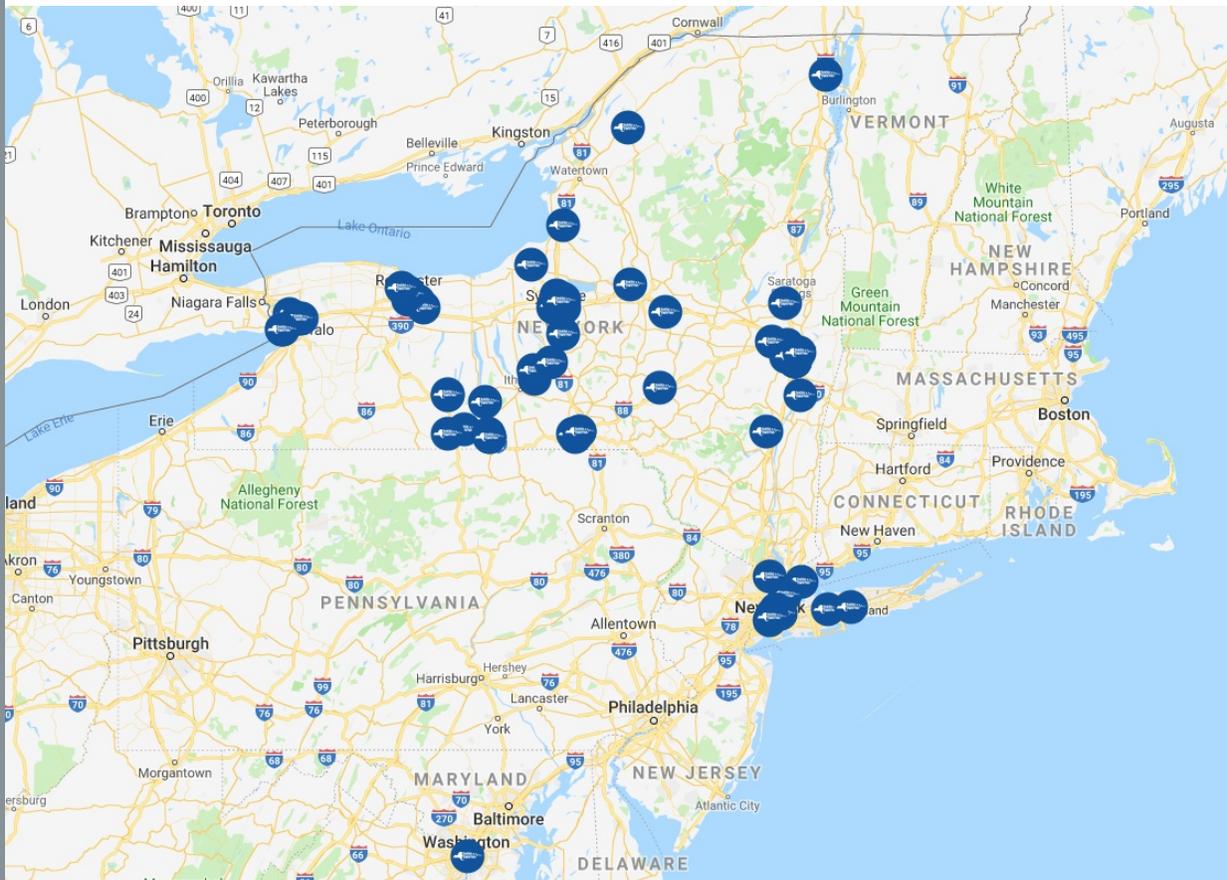
- Issue a memo in opposition to the NYHA
- Issue a press release on the NYHA
- Write a letter to the editor or an opinion piece in a newspaper

Growing the Coalition

Help us expand our membership in 2021! The coalition is currently 90 members strong. We would like to get to 100 this session.

If you know an organization that also supports allowing a variety of healthcare coverage options rather than forcing all New Yorkers to use a single government-run health insurance program, direct them to the 'Join' section on our website. We are also happy to speak to potential members or provide you with customized materials you can use to recruit potential allies.

Visit our
website



Useful Links and Information

[New York State 2021 Legislative Session Calendar](#)

[New York Health Act: Cost vs Tax Increase](#)

[What is ERISA? Does it impact the New York Health Act?](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions about the New York Health Act](#)

[Myths and Facts about the New York Health Act](#)

[Single Payer PowerPoint Presentation](#)

[Sample Opposition Memo](#)

[RAND Study on Single Payer](#)