



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.

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## Legislative Hearings

The 2021 Joint Legislative Hearings kicked off this week. The Health and Medicaid hearing, originally scheduled for for February 3, has been pushed back to [Thursday, February 25](#) at 9:30 AM. It will be streamed live on the Senate and Assembly websites.

Government officials and representatives of health advocacy groups from across the state will provide testimony to the Senate and Assembly Health committees. Let us know if you intend on providing testimony.

The process for the Legislative hearings is a little different this year, mostly due to the fact that they are being held virtually using Zoom video conferencing. The Senate [website](#) explains how to register or submit testimony.

**25**  
FEB  
2021

# Joint Legislative Public Hearing on 2021 Executive Budget Proposal: Topic Health/Medicaid

📍 Online Hearing

Virtual Public Hearing | Zoom

9:30 AM | 📺 WILL STREAM LIVE

📅 Add to Calendar

## Executive Budget



Governor Andrew Cuomo released his proposed budget for State Fiscal Year 2022. The Governor has proposed a [\\$192.9 billion budget](#).

Single payer was not mentioned. His proposals for the Essential Plan are aimed at solving some of the cost and coverage issues.

The Executive Budget provides \$5.52 billion for the Essential Plan Program. In addition, the Executive proposes to:

- Eliminate premiums for Essential Plan coverage for 400,000 New Yorkers earning between \$39,300 and \$52,400 for a family of four (150%-200% FPL), effectively removing premiums for all EP enrollees.
- Invest \$420 million in rates of payments to insurers who cover Essential Plan enrollees. This rate change will enhance provider reimbursement, which will promote and support access to vital healthcare services.

- Establish a \$200 million Essential Plan Quality Pool to promote high quality of care. These funds strengthen provider networks, incentivize providers based on performance, and ensure provider access for all Essential Plan members.
- Retitles Title 11-D of the Social Services Law from Family Health Plus Plan to “Basic Health Plan”.

The Governor is also proposing to both submit an application for an extension to the 1115 waiver and resubmit the 1115 (DSRIP) waiver amendment that was rejected by the Trump administration.

- The new 1115 extension request is for three years and includes the carve out of pharmacy services from managed care to fee-for-service, as well as the state’s transition from an Administrative Services Organization model to a Broker model for non-emergency medical transportation.
- In addition to a request for a waiver extension, the State is resubmitting its DSRIP waiver amendment that was denied last year. The State’s revised waiver amendment request will address value based payments, telehealth, workforce, health equity and social determinants of health. The State will also request additional support to assist in its COVID-19 response through this waiver amendment.

## Member Lobby Days

Are you hosting a virtual lobby day this Legislative Session? [Let us know!](#)

We will promote your lobby day and make sure that, if single payer is on your agenda, we help spread the message. We can also provide you with single payer-related materials. Just let us know what information would be most helpful to your group.

## Member Spotlight



The Long Island Association released their Federal, State and Local priorities and initiatives for 2021. We are happy to share that their top State priorities include:

- Oppose the New York Health Act which would eliminate private health insurance and impose billions of dollars in new state taxes to pay for a state-based single payer health insurance system, and oppose a wholesale reduction in provider reimbursement rates from current commercial levels which would cause a significant financial impact to hospitals, physicians and health systems, endangering access and quality of health care for all New Yorkers.

[Stimulus, garbage disposal, no 'Medicare for All' among LIA's 2021 priorities](#)  
Newsday

If you would like to share your organization's 2021 priorities, [contact us](#).

## New York Health Act Bill Tracker



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

No update to report. We are still waiting for the Senate and Assembly Health Committee Chairs to reintroduce the New York Health Act. We believe the sponsors may be making further changes to the legislation.

## What is ERISA?

Other states have set up task forces exploring state-run single payer health care systems. Setting aside the main issues such as increased taxes and lost jobs, another obstacle that all states face is ERISA, which stands for the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act.

The majority of employer-sponsored health plans are subject to ERISA. Employers that are self-insured can argue a state-run plan with funding from a payroll tax would put pressure on employers to drop their coverage for their employees or they would be effectively paying twice.

Even sponsors of the legislation such as Senator Gustavo Rivera concede this is an issue lawmakers face.

Learn more about how ERISA could impact the New York Health Act [here](#).

## Single Payer in the News

*A mix of state and national news about single payer, Medicare for All, public option and other health care related stories.*

[Public Option Won't Serve the Public](#)

The Hill

[Nevada Explores Potential State Public Option Models, Impacts](#)

HealthPayer Intelligence

[One Sentence in Biden Stimulus Plan Reveals His Health Care Approach](#)

The New York Times

## Ways to Get Involved

Rather than seeing the challenges the State faces due to COVID-19 as an obstacle to enacting a Single Payer legislation, sponsors of the New York Health Act along with advocates are arguing that the pandemic demonstrates that why it should be passed 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

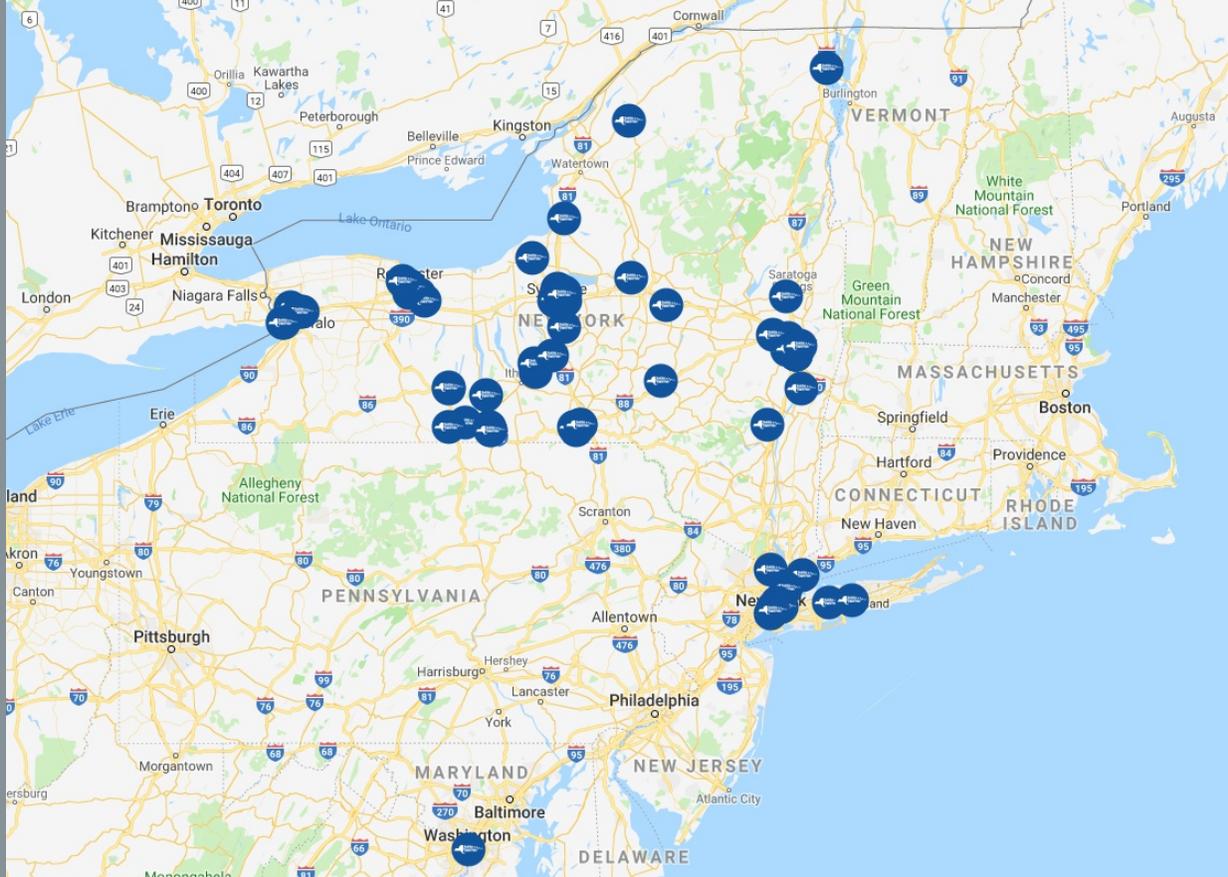
## Growing the Coalition

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





## Realities Resources

### 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](#)