

Cancer Advocates Urge U.S. Supreme Court to Protect the Rights of Individuals With Medicaid Coverage

ACS CAN files a “friend of the court” brief supporting Medicaid access in the case of *Medina v. Planned Parenthood*.

March 17, 2025 By American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

WASHINGTON, D.C. – [On March 12] the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), along with partner organizations, filed an [amicus curiae brief](#) with the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) in the case of *Medina v. Planned Parenthood*. The brief highlights the critical importance of Medicaid in disease prevention and treatment, as well as extensive research showing a strong link between access to Medicaid and improved health outcomes, with an emphasis on the critical role Medicaid plays in rural areas. The brief includes original research published by the American Cancer Society and underscores the importance of patients being able to enforce the right given to them by the Medicaid Act to choose their own medical provider by using the civil rights law 42 U.S.C. Section 1983 (Section 1983). The following is a statement from Lisa Lacasse, president of ACS CAN:

“Research has repeatedly shown access to health insurance is one of the most significant determining factors in surviving a cancer diagnosis. By providing affordable, comprehensive health insurance, Medicaid is a critical program that increases screening rates, thus improving early detection of cancer, access to treatment, and overall patient health for the almost 80 million people covered nationwide.

“For more than 50 years, Section 1983 has been a critical avenue that has empowered people covered by Medicaid to enforce their rights under the law. The choice-of-provider provision was created by Congress to protect patients. Many times, Section 1983 has been the only recourse individuals have when their Medicaid rights have been violated.

“Access to all qualified providers is an underlying right that ensures people living with cancer won’t have their care interrupted or stopped completely and ensures people have access to regular cancer screenings and prevention. Any restriction on where an individual can go to access the care they need creates an unnecessary and potentially life-threatening barrier, especially for those in rural communities with already limited access and limited incomes. Barring use of Section 1983 to enforce a key provision of the Medicaid Act would have a devastating impact on cancer

patients and their families across the country.

“ACS CAN urges SCOTUS to protect the rights of individuals who have health insurance through Medicaid to choose their own qualified provider as Congress clearly intended, and to be able to enforce this right using the civil rights law Section 1983.”

The groups are represented by Eversheds Sutherland LLP.

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