

End the surprise insurance gap

CALL TO ACTION

Tell Lieutenant Governor Cagle to Stop SB 8!

On Monday, March 12, opponents to our comprehensive and fair solution to surprise medical bills in Georgia sprung a legislative maneuver that would halt our progress and instead provide a shortcut to passing a significantly watered-down version, now disguised as SB 8. SB 8 passed the State Senate last year but was not considered in the House Insurance Committee. Now SB 8 is being used as the legislative vehicle to push HB 678, which does not solve the problem of surprise billing. Right now, Georgia's Lieutenant Governor, Casey Cagle, can stop this in its tracks by preventing it from coming to a vote on the floor of the Georgia Senate.

We need your help today! Please write or call Lieutenant Governor Cagle immediately. The Georgia Coalition to End the Surprise Insurance Gap represents 16 doctor and patient groups, and hundreds of thousands of Georgians who all support the comprehensive solution we've been advocating for and know it's desperately needed. Georgians deserve a comprehensive solution that takes patients out of the middle and ends surprise medical bills – not a watered down, toothless transparency bill that doesn't solve the problem.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR GEORGIA LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR CASEY CAGLE

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Fill out online email form: <https://ltgov.georgia.gov/contact-lt-governor>

SAMPLE CALL POINTS

- I'm calling to ask Lieutenant Governor Cagle to stop SB 8 in its tracks by not allowing it to come to the Senate floor for a vote.
- My name is _____ and I'm calling with _____.
- Georgians are increasingly receiving surprise medical bills for care they thought was covered by insurance, often in emergencies, when they need their coverage the most.
- This is the result of Georgia's narrow insurance networks. Insurers in Georgia are shifting costs to patients through higher premiums, deductibles and cost shares, while at the same time making their networks smaller – offering fewer choices to patients. Georgia's insurance networks are, according to studies, among the narrowest in the country.
- I, along with the Georgia Coalition to End the Surprise Insurance Gap, support a comprehensive legislative solution to surprise bills – one that takes patients out of the middle, ends surprise bills, and ensures access to care – and there's a bipartisan bill, SB 359, which would do just that.
- SB 359 passed the Senate unanimously this session, but opponents in the State House refuse to even consider it.
- Instead, insurers are pushing forward watered down legislation, now SB 8, which would do little to help the Georgia families affected by surprise bills. This approach is completely contrary to the Senate's long standing position of providing for a comprehensive solution to surprise billing.

- Georgians deserve better.
- We urge you to stop SB 8 from moving forward this session, and support our efforts to bring about a true solution that provides relief to Georgia families.
- To further a comprehensive solution we ask you to support SB 359, now in the House Insurance Committee, and to encourage the Senate Health & Human Services Committee to consider HB 678.

SAMPLE EMAIL OR LETTER

The Honorable Casey Cagle
Lieutenant Governor, Georgia
240 State Capitol SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Lt. Governor Cagle,

On behalf of a coalition of 16 Georgia patient and physician groups, representing hundreds of thousands of Georgians, I write to urge you to advance a comprehensive solution to surprise medical bills this year, by stopping SB 8 in its tracks, and insisting on a comprehensive solution Georgians deserve.

Georgia patients are increasingly receiving surprise medical bills for care they thought was covered by insurance, often in emergencies, when they need their coverage the most. These unexpected insurance gaps come on top of the fact that Georgians are already struggling with record-high health insurance premiums and can't always afford their deductibles and cost-sharing requirements. Nearly a quarter of Georgia residents had medical debt in collections.

Patients and doctors agree that Georgia needs a comprehensive legislative solution to end the surprise insurance gap – one that takes patients out of the middle, ends surprise bills, and ensures access to care. This has been the long-standing position of the State Senate, which just this year passed a bipartisan, comprehensive solution in the form of SB 359.

However, instead of the solution we need and deserve, we are being offered a Band-Aid. On March 12, SB 8, our comprehensive bill from last year, was amended to remove all patient protections and solutions to surprise bills. As currently written, the watered-down bill provides little relief to patients affected by surprise bills.

This maneuver is a trick and a trap, and we hope you will remain committed to providing a comprehensive solution to surprise medical bills. Hundreds of thousands of Georgians – doctors and patients together – support the bipartisan, comprehensive solution represented by SB 359, which provides meaningful patient protections and will end surprise billing once and for all. We aren't fooled by the false promises of SB 8, which, as currently written, does nothing to address the real problem. Georgians deserve better.

We urge you to stop SB 8 from moving forward this session, and support our efforts to bring about a true solution that provides relief to Georgia families.

Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

SOCIAL MEDIA

Georgia Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle needs to hear from you. Below are key hashtags and sample tweets and posts you can use and a table that will help you tag Lt. Governor Casey Cagle.

Hashtags

#NoSurpriseInsuranceGap, #PatientsBeforeProfits, #AccessToCare, #FairCoverage
#GApol, #GApolitics, #GAleg

Sample Tweets for Lt. Governor Casey Cagle

- . [@CaseyCagle](#), GA patients have suffered too long from rising healthcare costs and surprise medical bills, and SB 8 is NOT the answer. We need a comprehensive solution that takes patients out of the middle and ends surprise billing. #GApol #AccessToCare <https://endtheinsurancegap.org/press-releases/patient-groups-join-georgia-coalition-end-surprise-insurance-gap>
- Patients and doctors across the state agree that GA needs a comprehensive solution that ends surprise bills, [@CaseyCagle](#). Please stop the watered-down SB 8, and help us push for a true solution. #GApol #NoSurpriseInsuranceGap <https://endtheinsurancegap.org/press-releases/patient-groups-join-georgia-coalition-end-surprise-insurance-gap>

Sample Facebook Post

- Georgians are paying more than ever for health insurance, but plans are failing when we need them most. In an emergency, we get stuck with surprise bills for care we thought was covered by your insurance. [@CaseyCagleGa](#), you have the opportunity this session to end surprise bills for patients in Georgia with a comprehensive solution that takes patients out of the middle, increases transparency and ensures access to care. Don't be fooled by SB 8, it won't address any of these problems. Stop SB 8 and work towards a comprehensive solution, like SB 359. We hope we can count on your support. We literally can't afford to wait. #GApol #EndSurpriseBilling <https://endtheinsurancegap.org/press-releases/patient-groups-join-georgia-coalition-end-surprise-insurance-gap>