



**COVERED  
CALIFORNIA**

# Media Clips

## COVERED CALIFORNIA BOARD CLIPS

Feb. 1, 2026 – Mar. 15, 2026

Since our last board meeting, the media coverage includes:

- Open enrollment period ends, with 1 million Americans leaving the marketplace
- Claims of widespread fraud on ACA marketplaces continue
- House subpoenas health insurers to testify on fraud
- Impacts of “Big, Beautiful Bill” starting to be felt across healthcare industry
- Push for single payer health care system gains momentum in California
- CMS Administrator Dr. Oz claims too many people are enrolled in ACA marketplaces
- Study finds Americans cutting back on essentials to pay for health care

### PRESS RELEASES

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[Obamacare enrollment fell by more than 1M enrollees for 2026](#)

Fox Business .....Jan. 30, 2026

[Healthcare experts warn ‘people will die’ unless state steps up amid federal cuts](#)

Los Angeles Times ..... Feb. 1, 2026

[Bipartisan deal on health care subsidies not dead yet, senator says](#)

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[Officials: California health programs lose billions of federal dollars](#)

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[With enhanced federal subsidies expired, Covered California sees steady renewals but fewer new sign-ups](#)

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# News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Feb. 26, 2026

## **As Enhanced Federal Subsidies Expire, Covered California Ends Open Enrollment With State Subsidies Keeping Renewals Steady — for Now — and New Signups Down**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — Covered California announced that despite the expiration of federal tax credits that helped millions of Americans afford health insurance, over 1.9 million Californians signed up for or renewed their insurance during the 2026 open-enrollment period.

This year, 235,055 Californians newly selected a health plan for 2026 and a record of nearly 1.7 million Californians renewed their health insurance, bringing Covered California's overall enrollment to a near-record high of 1,927,371 enrollees. That includes 389,590 Californians who enrolled in plans with subsidies from the state of California that lower their monthly premiums. On average, these enrollees are receiving \$45 per month in assistance in 2026.

While the count of renewals is strong due to the historic levels of enrollment in 2025, California's state subsidies showed that affordability makes the critical difference. For the lowest-income consumers who are eligible for state subsidies that match the enhanced federal financial help that has expired, renewal rates are in line with last year's. On the other hand, for those middle-income consumers who lost all Enhanced Premium Tax Credits, the cancellation rate among renewing enrollees has been 22 percent, double the 11 percent seen last year.

"Despite Donald Trump and the Republicans' continued attacks on health care access and affordability, Californians once again showed how valuable health insurance is to them by signing up for high-quality coverage through Covered California," said Gov. Gavin Newsom. "Covered California continues to be a lifeline for working-class Californians. I'm proud that the state could step up and provide assistance to those who need it most so they can retain access to critical health insurance that helps protect them and their families."

California allocated \$190 million from the Health Care Affordability Reserve Fund (HCARF) in 2026 to provide state-funded tax credits for individuals earning up to 165 percent of the federal poverty level. This support will help keep monthly premiums consistent with 2025 levels for those with an annual income of up to \$23,475 for an individual or \$48,225 for a family of four.

**Table 1: Covered California’s Plan Selections at the End of Open Enrollment**

<b>Net Plan Selection</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
New Enrollment	255,575	263,325	306,382	345,711	235,055
Renewals	1,521,867	1,476,043	1,478,271	1,633,793	1,692,316
<b>Total Plan Selections</b>	<b>1,777,442</b>	<b>1,739,368</b>	<b>1,784,653</b>	<b>1,979,504</b>	<b>1,927,371</b>

New enrollment is down 32 percent from last year, while renewals are up 4 percent so far. The count of renewing enrollees is expected to decrease over the coming months as fallout continues from increased premiums due to the expiration of the Enhanced Premium Tax Credits (EPTC). Cancellations from consumers eligible for renewal do not settle until after April, but based on data so far, terminations are 32 percent higher than last year.

Following four consecutive years of growth and record enrollment in 2025, overall enrollment dipped in 2026, but it remains the second-highest total at the end of open enrollment in Covered California’s history.

“This year’s open enrollment was unique for many reasons, amplified by the loss of the Enhanced Premium Tax Credits that have helped thousands of Californians pay for their monthly premiums,” Covered California Executive Director Jessica Altman said. “Many Californians see the value in remaining covered, but they had to make sacrifices and shift to lower-tier plans. We see it as a commitment to health and the value that Covered California provides. We’re proud of what we’ve accomplished, but much work remains, with more federal changes for 2027 on the horizon.”

The loss of EPTC led to fewer new signups across all ethnicities for Californians, with new enrollment down 32 percent overall. Latino communities were most affected, with enrollment down 39 percent. Those who identified as Black or African American saw a 34 percent drop in new signups. More than one in three new enrollees chose Bronze plans for 2026 compared to fewer than one in four last year. It also led to more than 130,000 renewing Californians switching to Bronze-level plans for 2026.

Californians making above 400 percent of the federal poverty level also saw major declines in enrollment, as they are no longer eligible for any tax credits due to the loss of EPTC. New signups among this population were down 59 percent compared to last year, and this group had the highest renewal cancellation rate (22 percent) among all income groups.

Nearly half of Covered California's enrollees (935,700) reside in Southern California, and another 20 percent (391,680) live in the Greater Bay Area. The Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley region has 205,610 Californians enrolled in coverage, while 148,620 are covered in San Diego.

### **Signing Up for Coverage Is Easy**

Those who didn't sign up for coverage during open enrollment can still get health insurance during Covered California's ongoing special-enrollment periods, which are available to Californians experiencing a major life event, like getting married, losing a job, or having a child.

Consumers can learn more about their options by visiting [CoveredCA.com](http://CoveredCA.com), where they can easily find out if they qualify for financial help and see the coverage options in their area. Those interested in learning more about their coverage options can also:

Get free and confidential assistance over the phone, in a variety of languages, from one of more than 14,000 certified agents and community-based organizations throughout the state that provide free, confidential help in whatever language or dialect consumers prefer.

- Have a certified enroller call them and help them for free.
- Use Covered California's online calculator tool.
- Call Covered California at (800) 300-1506.

### **About Covered California**

Covered California is the state's health insurance marketplace, where Californians can find affordable, high-quality insurance from top insurance companies. Covered California is the only place where individuals who qualify can get financial assistance on a sliding scale to reduce premium costs. Consumers can then compare health insurance plans and choose the plan that works best for their health needs and budget. Depending on their income, some consumers may qualify for the low-cost or no-cost Medi-Cal program.

Covered California is an independent part of the state government whose job is to make the health insurance marketplace work for California's consumers. It is overseen by a five-member board appointed by the governor and the Legislature. For more information about Covered California, please visit [www.CoveredCA.com](http://www.CoveredCA.com).

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