



INDIANA COMMUNITY ACTION POVERTY INSTITUTE

Research and Public Policy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 26, 2025

Contact: Erin Macey, 317-270-0874 | emacey@incap.org

Interim Study on Medical Debt is Welcome News

Indianapolis, IN – This week, the Indiana state legislature announced that lawmakers [will be studying medical debt](#) in this year's interim study session. The decision to include medical debt as a central focus of study for legislators comes at a time of critical importance: medical debt is increasingly recognized as a drain on families nationwide, with an estimated [15 million Americans](#) showing medical debt on their credit reports in 2024. Medical debt also plays an outsized role in Indiana, a state with the [11th highest share](#) of medical debt nationwide and an estimated [\\$2.2 billion](#) in collections. Research shows that [having medical debt makes it more difficult](#) to afford basic needs, seek health care, and access credit.

“We all want to be able to care for ourselves and our loved ones, but medical debt poses undue financial hardship that prevents this from being a reality for countless Hoosiers,” said Zia Saylor, Researcher at the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute. “It is important that lawmakers recognize the medical debt crisis we have and the urgent need for policies to address it.”

Lauren Murfree, Policy Analyst at the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute, echoed this sentiment. “Medical debt is not just debt. It’s about being able to take care of yourself and your loved ones when it’s most needed. We recently interviewed new mothers and their experiences really highlighted how all-encompassing medical debt can become – even in joyful moments like the birth of a child.”

This [one-pager](#), released in fall 2024, highlights key themes from the larger study, finding that mothers across the state and socioeconomic groupings struggled with medical debt, with some foregoing necessary postpartum care to ensure that they could afford necessities for their child. "Providing Hoosiers with protections against medical debt will allow families and communities to thrive, and, for this reason, we deeply appreciate that lawmakers are taking the time to study the issue and develop policy solutions," Murfree concluded.

Over the past two years, the Institute has joined [a diverse group of partners](#) in support of legislation to [address medical debt](#).

One of those partners is the United Way of Central Indiana. "We are grateful to the General Assembly for their willingness to study the issue of medical debt and ways to prevent more Hoosiers from experiencing its harmful effects," shared Sam Snideman, Vice President of Government and Sector Relations. "We know from our medical debt forgiveness efforts with the United Neighborhood Centers of Indianapolis and Undue Medical Debt that medical debt remains an obstacle to individual and family economic security for too many Hoosiers, especially for those who are in or near poverty. We hope that the interim study will raise meaningful and actionable solutions for the legislature to consider in 2026, and we look forward to continuing our close work with legislators and all stakeholders in the fight for the long-term health and economic well-being of every person in our state."

Partners at The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society also praised the Indiana General Assembly's move to study medical debt. "Medical debt is no-fault debt," said Dave Almeida, director of state government affairs for The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. "It's different from other debt because no one chooses to become sick, which means that no one should have to choose between putting food on the table, paying the rent, putting the kids through college, or engaging in life-saving treatment."

Yet, that's exactly what patients are experiencing. In [polling we've conducted](#), more than four in 10 patients made the decision to delay medical care because they did not want to go further into debt.

Treatment for blood cancer and medical debt have something in common: the earlier the intervention, the better the outcome. We appreciate the General Assembly's recognition of medical debt as an issue that deserves special attention and we look

forward to working alongside members to find solutions to an issue that affects so many patients and survivors.”

For more information about medical debt in Indiana, reports are available from the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute’s [medical debt](#) page.

#####

About the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute

The Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute engages in research and promotes public policies to help Hoosier families achieve and maintain financial well-being. We believe that when Hoosiers are financially stable, they can achieve their full potential and better contribute to their communities. The Institute is a program of the Indiana Community Action Association.