Governor Baker filed a bill with the State Legislature that would disqualify over 180,000 working parents and childless adults from MassHealth and gives them the agency authority to cut benefits that could affect everyone on MassHealth including children, the elderly and people with disabilities.

**Denying MassHealth coverage for up to 42,000 working poor families**

- Under the Governor’s bill, low income parents, and other non-disabled adults who have access to health insurance through work will no longer be eligible for any help from MassHealth if the monthly premium is “affordable.”

- According to MassHealth, for an adult with income under 133% of poverty, 5% of family income is “affordable” for insurance through work. But for families at such low income levels ($21,600 for a parent and one child) no premium contribution is affordable, much less with the added deductibles and cost sharing of private insurance.

**Denying MassHealth to 140,000 near poor non-disabled adults**

- The Governor’s bill will lower MassHealth eligibility from 133% to 100% of the poverty level for non-disabled adults. This will cause 100,000 parents and 40,000 childless adults to lose MassHealth coverage.

- This is a major change in the income eligibility level for parents, which has been 133% of poverty since 1997. The Affordable Care Act set the income level for other adults at 133% of poverty in 2014.

- Many of those losing MassHealth may qualify for ConnectorCare. But its coverage provides fewer benefits (no dental, eyeglasses, or long term services and supports) and has co-pays almost five times higher than MassHealth.

- About 40% of those under 150% of poverty who are found eligible for ConnectorCare are not able to successfully enroll, and some of those losing MassHealth will not even be eligible for ConnectorCare.
Changing or eliminating optional benefits

- The Governor’s bill authorizes MassHealth to eliminate any optional benefit in 2018 or 2019 in order to save money.

- “Optional” Medicaid benefits include many essential services such as: prescription drugs, clinic services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech/language/hearing therapy, dental care, prosthetics, optometry, eyeglasses, chiropractic services, personal care attendants, and hospice.

- Restricting or eliminating benefits will harm all types of MassHealth members including pregnant women, children, people with disabilities and seniors as well as non-disabled adults.

Changing pharmacy benefits to a closed drug formulary

- The Governor’s bill gives MassHealth permanent authority to change pharmacy benefits, including using a closed drug formulary, with no required safeguards or consumer protections.

- A closed drug formulary will make it more difficult or in some cases impossible to obtain certain drugs that are now available to MassHealth members.

- A closed drug formulary will most likely affect people who need high cost drugs. This change will affect pregnant women, children, adults with disabilities on SSI as well as non-disabled adults.