

EDITOR'S PICK

## Letter to the Editor: Big Beautiful Bill?

Jul 25, 2025



On July 4, 2025 President Trump signed what was identified as the “Big Beautiful Bill” (BBB), which started in the House, was modified in the Senate and finally signed into law. Prior to it being signed into law our very own Representative Mike Bost issued a press release stating: “President Trump and conservative majorities in Congress were elected to shut down the border invasion and put America’s taxpayers first.” He added: “I voted to lock in the Trump tax cuts and avert the largest tax hike in our nation’s history, while securing the border and kicking fraudsters off benefits intended for families in need. I’m proud to work closely with President Trump to deliver on our promises to the American people.”

Let us peel back the onion here. Presently in the 12th Congressional District there are 196,522 recipients on Medicaid, and 80,492 of those are children. In our own Effingham County, there are 7,423 recipients on Medicaid, with 3,500 of those being children. Does Mr. Bost think that children are fraudsters as well? An example of real fraud is a recent case brought by the Department of Justice where a Pakistani national orchestrated a \$650 million fraud scheme that primarily targeted an Arizona Medicaid program offering addiction treatment and other services for Native Americans. That is real fraud!

A study of the bill conducted by the Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina (Sheps Center) found that there are 9 rural hospitals in Illinois at risk of reducing services or ultimately shutting down due to the approved cuts in Medicaid. Six of those hospitals are within Mike Bost’s congressional district. This does not even consider the impacts to nursing home care in his district.

I would like to remind his constituents that Mr. Bost earns a salary of \$174,000 per year, has health care and pension benefits only available to a few. According to 2023 statistics the median salary in the 12th Congressional District is \$66,758, with a poverty rate of 12.9%.

Another aspect of the BBB is the burdensome work requirements. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, as reported by The Atlantic, 64 percent of nondisabled adults on Medicaid have a job. What Republicans have created is a red tape machine where they hope people will give up in applying for benefits. As Annie Lowrey of the Atlantic magazine recently stated in her article: "They are voting to annoy their own constituents to death."

Despite the denial by Mr. Bost the BBB will increase the federal deficit. In an analysis performed by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), for the period from 2026-2034, the federal deficit will increase by \$3.8 trillion dollars, and is attributable to tax changes, including extending provisions of the 2017 tax act. This is documented in a letter issued on May 25, 2025 by the CBO and was addressed to Democratic Congressman Brendon Boyle and Hakeem Jeffries, and is public record.

No Mr. Bost, the real fraudsters are people like you who dupe the public into believing there are hordes of people abusing Medicaid, when really it is nothing but the ghost of Ronald Reagan speaking about "welfare queens". As is always the case there is little or no proof that there is abuse from the poor common man; he is used and abused, and made into a boogeyman to excuse tax breaks to the wealthy, at the expense of those in need. This bill is nothing but a pig with lipstick on it, and is one bill that you definitely should have punched into the air and onto the floor of the House, but then again you likely just rubber stamped it because you were told to.

*Pat Lewis*

*Effingham*

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