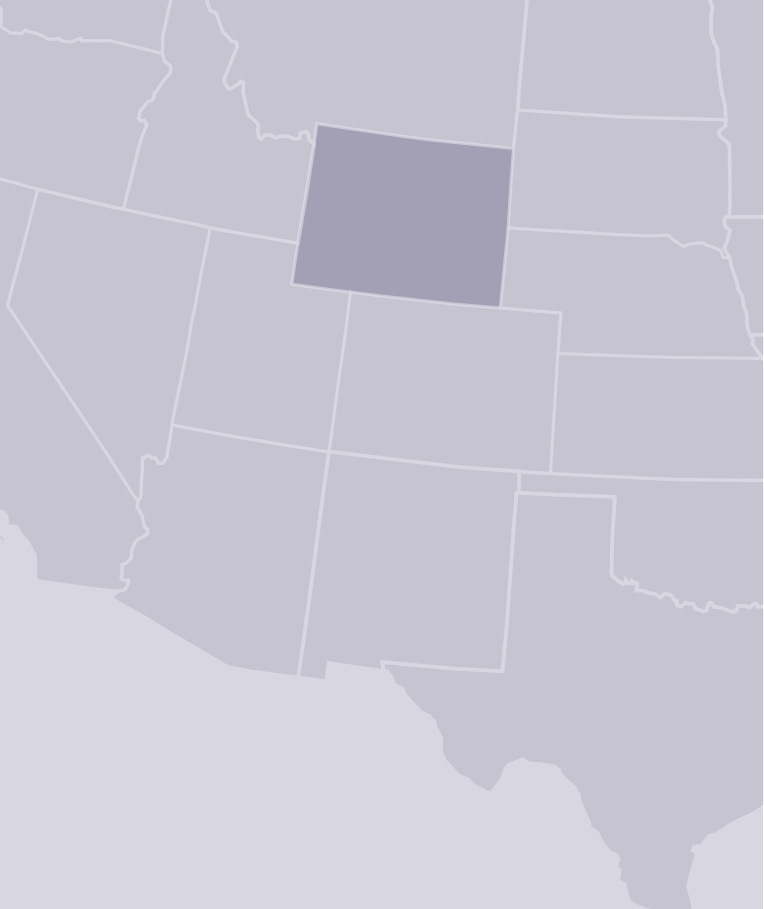
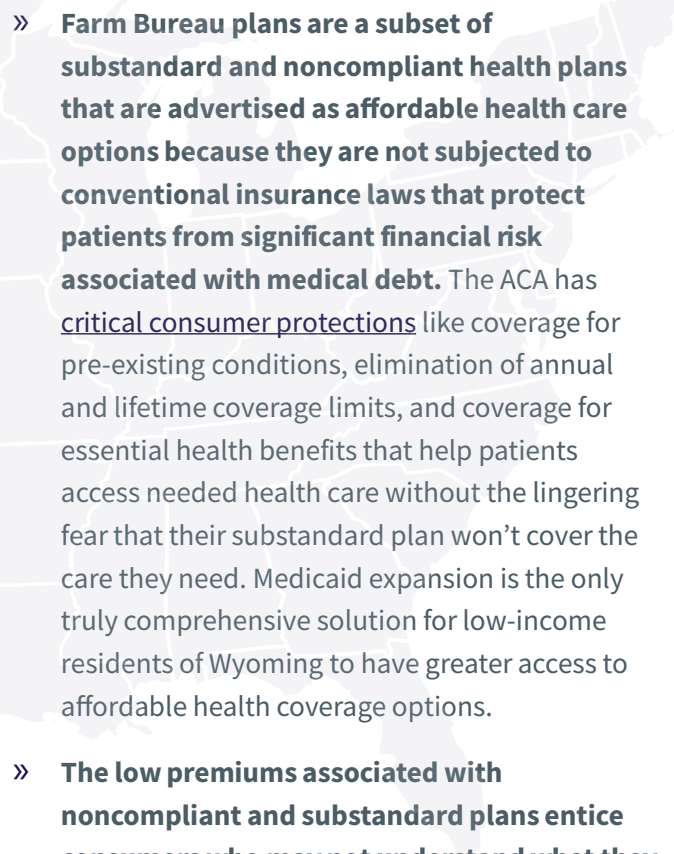




# Substandard Plans Are Not a Substitute for Medicaid Expansion



*Medicaid expansion is the only truly comprehensive solution for low-income residents of Wyoming to have greater access to affordable health coverage options.*

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- » **Farm Bureau plans are a subset of substandard and noncompliant health plans that are advertised as affordable health care options because they are not subjected to conventional insurance laws that protect patients from significant financial risk associated with medical debt.** The ACA has critical consumer protections like coverage for pre-existing conditions, elimination of annual and lifetime coverage limits, and coverage for essential health benefits that help patients access needed health care without the lingering fear that their substandard plan won't cover the care they need. Medicaid expansion is the only truly comprehensive solution for low-income residents of Wyoming to have greater access to affordable health coverage options.
  - » **The low premiums associated with noncompliant and substandard plans entice consumers who may not understand what they are purchasing, and are, therefore, vulnerable to more out-of-pocket costs down the line.** Non-compliant plans fail to provide the same degree of certainty and security for patients and consumers as traditional health insurance plans. The 2021 income threshold for Medicaid expansion is a salary of \$17,774.40 or less for an individual (Yes, you read that right!). For those who meet these income requirements, they truly cannot afford to cover additional out of pocket costs associated with substandard health plans such as farm bureau plans.

***Farm Bureau plans are not subjected to conventional insurance laws that protect patients from significant financial risk associated with medical debt.***

» **Farm Bureau plans and other noncompliant plans offer more limited coverage Medicaid and deny or charge higher premiums to people with pre-existing conditions.**

- In Iowa, in addition to denying coverage outright to some people, Farm Bureau plans may cost some applicants more due to factors such as health status and age. The plans also cut off coverage if someone hits a \$3 million lifetime limit on benefits.
- In Tennessee, the plans leave out coverage of certain essential health benefits and apply waiting periods and pre-existing condition exclusions in order to avoid paying for people’s expensive medical care. For example, people over 40 are required to submit an array of medical test results, and children who were born prematurely must disclose that.
- In Kansas, Farm Bureau officials have said their plans will deny coverage to some people and will not cover all essential health benefits, such as maternity care.

» **Farm bureau plans, in particular, try to appeal to middle-income farmers as a key constituency for these more limited health coverage options.** However, this does not represent a majority of the farmer demographic. Most farmers and farm workers who lack health insurance have low incomes, and for them, skimpy plans would be inadequate and unaffordable. Skimpier health plan options that fail to provide comprehensive coverage won’t solve health care affordability problems for most people working in agriculture, especially if they face illness or injury.

***With Medicaid expansion, low-income individuals can access needed health care when they need it most.***