



TOM'S CARE PLAN

May 2026

California must guarantee care at all stages of life

I know that the value we place on care – for children, for seniors, and for those with disabilities – is essential to lowering costs for Californians. Today, too many California families are being pushed to the financial brink to afford care for a loved one. Care is the foundation of our economy. It is the work that makes all other work possible.

But more than that, how we care for the most vulnerable in our society is a testament to who we are, and a reflection of our deepest values.

Care forms the essential pillar of a dignified life. As California leads the artificial intelligence revolution, we must recognize that care jobs are the jobs humans do best. No machine or algorithm can ever replace the innate compassion, patience, and empathy required to do this vital work. My care plan is about more than just lowering costs. It is about protecting and expanding the fundamentally human jobs that make all other work possible.

But right now, our system is fundamentally broken. The price of care is driving families into poverty while the workers providing that care are struggling to pay the bills. Meanwhile, corporations and their investors are **making** massive profits by raising prices and providing inferior care. Since 2022, the annual cost of a private room in a California nursing home has **surged** 20 percent to \$182,135. Given demographic trends, the crisis will only get worse. According to researchers, in the coming years, millions of seniors won't be able to **afford** the care they need.

At the same time, Donald Trump and Republicans in Congress have imposed catastrophic funding changes to Medicaid – a primary payer of long-term care – which will result in major ripple effects across the state. Unless we act, these cuts will **increase** the number of seniors living in poverty. Currently, **seniors** are the fastest-growing group of Californians experiencing homelessness. As Governor, I will refuse to abandon our seniors to poverty.



Families are also getting slammed when it comes to childcare. From 2020 to 2024, childcare costs **shot up** almost 30 percent – far exceeding inflation. Today, childcare costs can equal as much as a mortgage payment, upwards of \$3,000 a month per child. I believe that every family deserves access to high-quality, affordable childcare.

As Governor, I will treat those who provide care with the dignity and respect they deserve. I will also ensure families have the care they need, are not bankrupted by care costs, and that the working people who care for our loved ones are paid a wage that allows their own families to thrive. And I will pay for these programs by building a single-payer healthcare system and making corporations and billionaires pay their fair share of taxes.

Here's my plan to do exactly that –



As Governor, I will build a care system that delivers affordable long-term care for all Californians.

I believe that seniors and individuals with disabilities have a right to live without the fear of care costs, and should age with dignity. Californians deserve to have care that is affordable to them and meets their needs, especially home care.

However, in the coming years, millions of seniors won't be able to **afford** the care they need. At the same time, nursing home chains and investors are **raking in** massive profits. By 2030, one in five Californians will be 65 or older – yet 4 million older adults and people with disabilities are trapped in a no-win situation where they're forced to choose between healthcare or food, stuck in the middle of a coverage gap with no affordable access to care. To bridge this gap, family caregivers currently provide **\$81 billion** in unpaid care annually.

I will build a system that makes long-term care available to middle-class families that allows seniors to age with dignity. Californians must have access to in-home care, and build a single-payer system to ease crushing burden healthcare costs impose on families. We must establish a stable, permanent source of state revenue for care, allowing seniors to age where they want – because families shouldn't have to exhaust their life savings just to qualify for the help they need.

We will ensure childcare for all Californians.

While over **2 million California** children are eligible for subsidized care, only 16% are currently being served. I will fight to expand access through real choice for parents: a childcare system that includes centers, public/private partnerships, family childcare providers, and flexible schedules to actually meet the needs of working parents.



We will pay childcare providers the true cost of care.

Current state reimbursement rates for family childcare covers only 25–30% of providers' actual expenses. This forces providers – who are predominantly women of color – to earn effective wages as low as \$7 to \$10 per hour. Because of these systemic failures, 43% of early educators must rely on public safety net programs like Medi-Cal and food stamps just to survive.

As Governor, I will work to stabilize and improve the home care workforce.

We rely on over **807,000** In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) providers to be the backbone of independent living in California, but the statewide average wage is only \$18.83 an hour. I will transition to statewide collective bargaining for IHSS to end uneven, poverty-level wages across all 58 counties. I will also end the unfair exclusion of spouse and parent IHSS providers from Unemployment Insurance.



We will achieve this by transitioning California to a single-payer healthcare system and ensuring wealthy corporations pay their fair share.

California must transition to a single-payer healthcare system. For-profit healthcare is eating our state budget, and we spend billions of dollars a year subsidizing insurance executives and bureaucracy rather than providing care. We must build a single-payer system that delivers comprehensive care for all Californians, at a fraction of the cost of our current system.

In addition, I will close corporate tax giveaways – specifically the offshore “Water’s Edge Election” and the commercial property loophole under Prop 13 – raising over \$20 billion a year in new, sustainable revenue by ensuring commercial properties are assessed at their true market value. **I will also create the Golden State Sovereign Wealth Fund** by taxing AI companies and use this money to expand jobs that fundamentally only humans can do and earmark funds specifically to scale care programs.

With new state revenue streams, and a new healthcare system, we can finally treat the care workforce with the respect it deserves without raising taxes on middle-class families. In the process, we’ll create thousands of new, good-paying jobs and drastically lower out-of-pocket costs for parents and seniors.



The unprecedented wealth generated in California should provide every family with access to high-quality, dignified care at all stages of life. But right now, our care system is defined by profound dedication and crushing costs, essential work and systemic neglect. We must put California's children, seniors, and our most vulnerable populations first, and treat and compensate the providers who do this essential work with the fairness and dignity they deserve.

As Governor, I will repair this broken bargain, by delivering single-payer healthcare, and with strong revenue policies that close corporate giveaways to raise billions in new funding. Together, we will make sure that every Californian has access to the quality care they need at all stages of life.

