

The American Health Care Act is before you in an attempt to replace the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, signed into law seven years ago today, March 23, 2010. This bill can take health coverage away from up to 24 million Americans, reversing proven positive health outcomes and putting the United States farther behind other industrialized countries for its poor health system and poor attention to wealth, education and race based health disparities.

Health care insurance coverage through the ACA provides access to preventive care services that stave chronic disease, supports disabled and elderly citizens receiving care at home, and financially backs access and protection of comprehensive child healthcare services. Voting YES to the AHCA will destroy the health and personal finances of people who depend on the life saving care they they receive from their states Medicaid expansion or affordable state exchange markets, which ensured that they can continue working and providing for their families.

Rates of chronic preventable disease are higher in poor communities and communities of color due to the systems that have disinvested and undermined their rights to receiving high quality education and a living wage that opens opportunities for wealth building. The AHCA would directly defund the following programs that have been created to right-side the racial health disparities that have put the United States on the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination:

- Prevention and Public Health Fund
- National health disparities strategy
- National quality strategy
- National prevention and wellness strategy
- National health literacy strategy
- Federal HIT strategy
- National HIV/AIDS Strategy
- Medicare Equity Plan
- REACH grant
- Office of Minority Health
- Comparative Effectiveness Research
- Data Collection and Reporting
- Section 1557 (Nondiscrimination)
- Personal Responsibility Education

The American Health Care Act has a funding provision that cuts taxes for the wealthiest families, saving the top 400 earners in the U.S. \$7 million each in taxes that directly fund the Medicaid program. The AHCA restructures the tax incentive feature by flattening the tax credit benefit that those enrolled in private insurance receive. The new structure does not take age, income or geographic location into account, resulting in a shift of the benefit to those who have more income. Therefore, the AHCA is being discussed as the most regressive taxation law to redistribute wealth in U.S. history, providing protections to the rich, and leaving the poor to suffer in increasing sickness.

Medicaid expansion has been a positive aspect for states that chose to do so under the ACA, it is one of the most popular features of the bill, alongside the elimination of pre-existing condition clauses and lifetime limits. Block granting of the Medicaid program would leave many states with a fiscal inability to maintain the level of care for the enrolled population. They will be forced to cut other essential public services due to depleted State General Funds behind a decreased Medicaid match rate. These public service departments, behavioral health, transportation, education, and housing are important aspects of a person's health status. Health not totally dependent on quality and frequency of care, the social determinants of health account for much of the variation in outcomes; therefore, the AHCA disinvests in its population from many angles. If states choose to continue funding Medicaid expansion themselves, they will have to sharply increase taxes, lower payments to doctors, or enact draconian cuts to Medicaid eligibility and baseline services. In either case, the AHCA blows holes into states with low revenue.

Honored and distinguished congressmen and women, it is your duty to represent your constituents and vote towards the best interest of your population. The task of changing a law should only be to improve upon it. The American Health Care Act does not improve upon the ACA, it radically changes its funding structure and eliminates programs. It was said by representatives of the presidential administration that the American Health Care Act was created in the interest of pure politics. We urge you, do not allow millions of people to lose essential quality health care coverage, the same care that you are privileged to receive, in order to make a political point. There are lives hanging in the balance. The future of the Medicaid program hangs in the balance. Please vote NO to any iteration of the AHCA, especially before the American people are able to see a CBO analysis and return to you with comments.