



LEGISLATIVE ALERT

October 22, 2015

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the AFL-CIO, I urge you to oppose the Restoring Americans' Healthcare Freedom Reconciliation Act (H.R. 3762). This bill will undermine the coverage expansions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and restrict women's access to safety-net medical services.

The ACA has enabled 17.6 million uninsured people to gain health insurance coverage. Many of these individuals—2.3 million—are young adults who are trying to establish financial independence. Many others are people who could not obtain coverage from their employer or who found coverage in the individual market to be unaffordable. We cannot take a giant step backward in exposing these individuals to the risk that their medical care will be unaffordable or that a catastrophic illness will bankrupt their families. H.R. 3762 will repeal elements of the ACA that enable the coverage expansions to work, resulting in a loss of coverage for millions.

The reconciliation package also directly targets Medicaid funding for nonprofit providers of women's health care services, eliminating payments for these services for one year for certain providers. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that many women will lose access to medical services. Their report on the bill notes, "The people most likely to experience reduced access to care would probably reside in areas without access to other health care clinics or medical practitioners who serve low-income populations." It is simply unacceptable to cut women off from these services.

It is true that the legislation repeals the 40 percent health benefits tax, which we believe should not be part of a health reform law aimed at keeping care affordable. The tax was intended to increase the out-of-pocket costs of people with employer-based coverage so they would use fewer services, thereby reducing expenditures on health care. We oppose this policy because it will shift costs to workers without directly addressing the major cost drivers in the healthcare system. However, repeal of the tax does not belong in legislation intended to eliminate coverage for millions of workers.

We urge you to vote against this harmful bill.

Sincerely,

William Samuel, Director
Government Affairs Department