



March 15, 2017

VIA ELECTRONIC & U.S.MAIL

EXAMPLE – LETTER SENT TO ALL Congressional Members from WA

Senator Maria Cantwell
915 Second Avenue, Suite 3206
Seattle, WA 98174

Dear Senator Cantwell:

We strongly urge you to oppose the House healthcare proposal released on March 6th, and any other proposals that end or threaten Medicaid expansion, caps and cuts Medicaid funding for states, reduces coverage for millions of Americans who currently get health care through the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and that threatens Medicare's comprehensive coverage and its financial viability which has been strengthened by the Affordable Care Act.

We ask you to stand firm in protecting the Medicaid expansion and the underlying Medicaid program.

Oppose proposals that phase out expansion over time or convert Medicaid to a "per capita cap" that shifts costs and risk to the state budgets. We ask you to keep intact the ACA benefits and reforms and not do anything to undermine Medicare. Please oppose the efforts to completely defund Planned Parenthood and eliminate abortion coverage as this is a fundamental attack on women's health care.

The House Republican proposal would have drastic consequences for the most in need of health care because they would force Washington to ration coverage and care. As our Congressional representatives, we ask you to speak out to express your objection to these proposals that would impact Washingtonians in a detrimental way.

We ask you to raise your voice in objection to the process as well. Providing health care coverage for the American people is a complicated policy challenge. Rushing a bill through the legislative process without critical data on how it would impact coverage will end up shifting costs to states and to vulnerable people. To not take the time to carefully examine the intended and unintended consequences is both irresponsible and inhumane.

The House proposal released on March 6th ends Medicaid expansion – which will increase the number of uninsured by millions. The House bill ends enhanced federal match for expansion after 2019, which would increase the number of uninsured people by millions once fully implemented.

The House proposals make health coverage unaffordable for Washingtonians – raising premiums and out-of-pocket costs, while raising taxes for many working families. This is not a good formula for Washingtonians. The ACA made health insurance more affordable for millions of people, including over three quarters of a million people here in Washington State. The House bill would put affordable coverage out of reach for many families, while raising costs for those who struggle the most to afford care.

The House proposal puts at risk vital healthcare to seniors and people with disabilities. The proposal takes \$345 billion out of the Medicare Trust Fund by repealing the 0.9% tax on high-income earners put in place by the ACA. The unnecessary elimination of this tax, while creating a windfall for millionaires and billionaires, reduces the projected solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund placing present and future Medicare recipients at risk.

The House proposal puts at risk vital healthcare to seniors and people with disabilities. Medicaid currently pays for the long-term care of more than 60 percent of nursing home residents. With the drastic changes to Medicaid included in the repeal bill, seniors needing long term care and their families will be seriously hurt. If the House Republican bill is enacted, it will place caps on Medicaid spending, again shifting costs away from the federal balance sheet and to the balance sheets of states and individuals. If that is enacted, seniors needing long term care and their families may find themselves out of luck, since nursing home care is extremely expensive.

We believe you should protect the health care services of Washingtonians including the services provided to women and their families by Planned Parenthood. Repealing the ACA, converting to a “per-cap” model for Medicaid, or any proposals that undermine Medicare, eliminates vital healthcare coverage for millions of Americans, including Washington workers, families and seniors who have earned the right to live in dignity, and people of all ages living with disabilities and their caregivers, for whom Medicaid is literally a lifeline. We ask that you oppose the propose legislation because it attacks Americans’ vital health care needs.

This proposal is harmful along the age spectrum - the House proposal threatens to undermine Washington State’s longstanding commitment to ensure children timely health care through Medicaid. Medicaid is the state’s largest health insurer for children, covering 800,000 of Washington’s 1.7 million children, and is critical to ensuring preventive primary care, as well as care for kids with disabilities and other special health care needs. We are gravely concerned that reduced federal funding will threaten cost-effective and preventive health care services for children - while pitting children’s needs against other vulnerable groups, including adults with disabilities and the elderly.

Additionally, the proposal related to per capita capping of Medicaid funding could impact the child-centered benefit package (EPSDT) which covers pediatric standard of care recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics to provide early detection of pediatric problems and timely services to ameliorate identified needs. These proposals risk too much and jeopardize the health of Washington’s children. The American Health Care Act will compromise the most cost-effective preventive services for Washington children, comprehensive care for children with special needs, and families’ ability to seek timely and cost-effective care.

We ask that you not stand by and remain silent as Americans' vital health care needs are under attack by the proposed legislation. We urge all of Washington's Congressional delegation to vote against this attack on our health care. If the House plan were to become law, those voting for it will be responsible for sending many Washington families, individuals and seniors into debt or financial ruin. Your vote will result in higher costs, low quality care, and less coverage – all the while giving a massive tax break to billionaires.

This is not reflective of American values or what the American people voted for in November. Please oppose the House Republican health care proposal. WSLC Political and Strategic Campaign Director Teresa Mosqueda, who staffs our coalition, is available to answer any questions or concerns. She may be reached at 206.353.5276 or tmosqueda@wslc.org.

Sincerely,

*AFGE Local 3937
American Federation of Teachers – WA State
ARNPs United of Washington State
Asian Counseling and Referral Services
Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
Board of Trustees of Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community (UUJEC)
Children's Alliance
Circle of Friends for Mental Health
Columbia Legal Services
Congregation Kol Haneshamah
Country Doctor Community Health Centers
Doctors For America - Washington chapter
Damaris Aragon Clinic
Economic Opportunity Institute
Edmonds Neighborhood Action Coalition – Healthcare Committee
Faith Action Network
Foundation for Healthy Generations
Health Care for All--WA
Heron Mental Health
IAM District 751 Retirement Club
International Community Health Services
League of Women Voters of Washington
Lifelong AIDS Alliance
Mainstreet Alliance
Mary Mahoney Professional Nurse Organization
NAMI WA
NARAL Pro-Choice Washington
National Physicians Alliance – Washington chapter
Neighborcare Health
Northwest Health Law Advocates
OneAmerica!*

Physicians for a National Health Program Western WA
Post Election Alliance for Civic Engagement Indivisible (PEACE Indivisible)
Pride At Work
Project Access Northwest
Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action (PSARA)
Puget Sound Older Lesbians Organizing for Change
Retired Public Employees Council
Retired Public Employees Council Chapter 13, Spokane
Sea Mar Community Health Centers
SEIU Healthcare 1199NW
Service Employee International Union, Local 775
Service Employee International Union, Local 925
Teamsters Joint Council 28
Teamsters Local 117
Temple Beth Am
The Arc of King County
United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 21
United Food and Commercial Workers, Local 367
Washington Advocates for Patient Safety
Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
Washington Coalition to Protect our Patients
Washington Community Action Network!
Washington Federation of State Employees
Washington Healthcare Access Alliance
Washington Low Income Housing Alliance
Washington State Alliance for Retired Americans
Washington State Council of County and City Employees
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Washington State Nurses Association
Washington State Public Health Association

