

INFO BRIEF

The Affordable Care Act and Reproductive Health



The Effect of an ACA Repeal

In the 115th Congress, Republican lawmakers are advocating for the **repeal of the Affordable Care Act without a clear replacement**. The ACA repeal would leave 29.8 million without insurance coverage and result in an estimated 43,000 deaths annually.¹ The GOP has had their sights set on repealing the ACA since 2010, and with Trump's support they have a clear path to disrupt ACA protections such as coverage for pre-existing conditions, expansion of Medicaid coverage for low-income people, and subsidies for those not eligible for Medicaid.

The ACA is a Women's Issue

The repeal disproportionately impacts low-income women who rely on the ACA for their holistic healthcare needs. According to the Center for American Progress, approximately 9.5 million women who were previously uninsured have gained health coverage through the ACA and **55 million women now have access to vital preventive care without copays or deductibles**.² These services include: annual exams, contraception, screening for sexually transmitted infections, and counseling for domestic and intimate partner violence. For the first time, the ACA made it illegal for federally funded health insurance providers to discriminate based on sex, race, national origin, and ability.

The ACA & Birth Control

The ACA covers all FDA approved birth control methods prescribed by a doctor. These include: diaphragms and sponges, birth control pills, vaginal rings, intrauterine devices (IUDs), and emergency contraception such as Plan B®.³ If the ACA is repealed, many women will have to pay out of pocket for birth control, making it less accessible and costlier. Annually, the **ACA saves women 1.4 billion dollars in birth control copays**.⁴

Affordable Care Act & Planned Parenthood Defunding

By manipulating the budget appropriations process and ACA repeal process, Congress intends to defund Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood receives federal funds primarily through the Title X family planning program and Medicaid reimbursements. By eliminating these federal funding mechanisms, Planned Parenthood will have to cut vital healthcare services such as mammograms, prenatal care, and birth control. Planned Parenthood predominantly serves low-income women, women of color, young women, and immigrant women; these communities will be disproportionately impacted by GOP efforts to eliminate women's healthcare choices.

NOW's Action Agenda

- Engage in coalition work to uplift Planned Parenthood Federation of America and other organizations that protect accessibility to women's healthcare needs.
- Educate activists and community members on how the ACA repeal impacts women.
- Lobby legislators to ensure they oppose any measure to repeal the ACA unless its replacement retains existing protections against pre-existing conditions, lifetime coverage caps, and gender-based discrimination, and adds improvements such as including a public option in states without sufficient market competition from private insurers.

- Lobby legislators to support the EACH Woman Act, which would require all insurance plans (including Medicaid and other federally-funded plans) to cover abortion care on the same basis as any other health care service.

Sources

- 1 Woolhandler, Steffie and David Himmelstein, "Repealing Obamacare Will Kill More than 43,000 People a Year." *Chicagotribune.com*. Chicago Tribune, 24 Jan. 2017. Web. 24 Feb. 2017.
- 2 Taylor, Jamila. "How Women Would Be Hurt by ACA Repeal and Defunding of Planned Parenthood." *Center for American Progress*. N.p., 17 Jan. 2017. Web. 24 Feb. 2017.
- 3 "Birth Control Benefits." *Healthcare.gov*. N.p., n.d. Web.
- 4 Burns, Janet. "Birth-Control Repeal May Cost Women \$1.4B A Year In Copays (For Starters)", *Forbes.com*, N.p., 17 Jan. 2017, Web. 24 Feb.
- 5 Taylor, Jamila. "How Women Would Be Hurt by ACA Repeal and Defunding of Planned Parenthood." *Center for American Progress*. N.p., 17 Jan. 2017. Web. 24 Feb. 2017.

ACTION BRIEF

The Affordable Care Act and Reproductive Health



In the 115th Congress, lawmakers are advocating for the **repeal of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) without a clear replacement**. Thanks to the ACA, approximately 9.5 million women who were previously uninsured have gained health coverage and **55 million women now have access to birth control and vital preventive care without copays or deductibles**.² These services include: annual exams, screening for sexually transmitted infections, contraception, and counseling for domestic and intimate partner violence. For the first time, the ACA made it illegal for federally funded health insurance providers to discriminate based on sex, race, national origin, and ability.

Instead of repealing the ACA, we need to improve it. For example, the EACH Woman Act would:

- Ensure that women who receive insurance through the federal government, are also entitled to coverage for abortion services.
- Require federal health insurance programs, including Medicaid, Medicare, and CHIP to provide coverage for abortion services.
- Block state and local governments from restricting abortion coverage using private health insurance plans.
- Reverse the Hyde Amendment and related abortion funding restrictions.

Strong pushback from constituents, particularly at recent town halls and demonstrations across the country, underscore the necessity of the ACA. Women across the country are also extremely energized, mobilized, and watching their representatives. In fact, according to the Pew Research Center, public support for legal abortion is now as high as it's been in two decades of polling: "about six-in-ten U.S. adults (59%) say abortion should be legal in all or most cases, compared with 37% who say it should be illegal all or most of the time." Furthermore, with regards to the Supreme Court's landmark 1973 ruling in *Roe v. Wade*, about seven-in-ten Americans (69%) say it should **not** be completely overturned.

As such, legislators must:

- Oppose any measure to repeal the ACA unless its replacement retains existing protections against pre-existing conditions, lifetime coverage caps, and gender-based discrimination, and adds improvements such as including a public option in states without sufficient market competition from private insurers.
- Support improvements to affordable health care overall, for example with the EACH Woman Act.

Legislators represent all of their constituents, and we will do all we can to hold them accountable for stances that do not reflect constituent interests, especially when those stances limit access to affordable healthcare.

Sources

- 1 Woolhandler, Steffie and David Himmelstein, "Repealing Obamacare Will Kill More than 43,000 People a Year." *Chicagotribune.com*. Chicago Tribune, 24 Jan. 2017. Web. 24 Feb. 2017.
- 2 Taylor, Jamila. "How Women Would Be Hurt by ACA Repeal and Defunding of Planned Parenthood." *Center for American Progress*. N.p., 17 Jan. 2017. Web. 24 Feb. 2017.
- 3 "Birth Control Benefits." *Healthcare.gov*. N.p., n.d. Web.
- 4 Burns, Janet. "Birth-Control Repeal May Cost Women \$1.4B A Year In Copays (For Starters)". *Forbes.com*, N.p., 17 Jan. 2017, Web. 24 Feb.

PHONE SCRIPT

Oppose Trumpcare



Make your call now! Your calls are making a difference!

Congressional Switchboard: 202 224 3121

Hello, my name is [name] and my zip code is [zip code].

As a constituent, I am calling to urge that [name of member of Congress] oppose Trumpcare, the American Health Care Act.

The bill would have devastating impacts on women, especially women of color, younger women, women with disabilities, and other marginalized individuals. It would throw millions of women off their health insurance, block women from choosing Planned Parenthood for their reproductive health care, and impose a nationwide ban on insurance coverage, private or public, for abortion care. The bill would even eliminate maternity care from health plans or make it prohibitively expensive. If this bill is enacted, maternal mortality will go up.

Please do all you can to defeat this dangerous bill. I will be watching your vote carefully.