



# **Save the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Toolkit**

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# TAKE ACTION: SAVE THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT



In the 115th Congress, right-wing lawmakers are trying to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and replace it with the American Health Care Act (AHCA). 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.** These services include: annual exams, screening for sexually transmitted infections, contraception, and counseling for intimate partner violence.

As we recently saw in the House of Representatives, leaving conservative lawmakers to their own devices is not a winning strategy. Stopping the AHCA from passing in the Senate will require a concerted effort from the public. **Below are action steps to save our healthcare.**

## 1. CALL YOUR SENATORS



Since November 2016, women have made 86% of calls to Congress and the White House. We need to build on this momentum to demand transparency and ask that Senators vote "NO" on the AHCA. Call your Senators at **202-224-3121** and reference the National Action Program's AHCA call script to make your voice heard.

## 2. TEXT YOUR SENATORS



Send your Senators a text using Resistbot! Text "**RESIST**" to **50409** to send a message to your representatives. Resistbot will transmit your text as a fax to your Senator's Office.

Hi, I'm Resistbot. I'm going to help you contact your officials. What would you like to tell them?

I rely on the ACA, and I want you to vote against repealing my health care.

Sounds great! I'll deliver that to Senators Brown and Portman.

## 3. EMAIL YOUR SENATORS



Go to <http://now.org/nap/reproductive-justice/> to send an email to your Senator. The more noise we make, the more likely it is that we will stop the AHCA.

## 4. ATTEND AN EVENT OR RALLY



Showing up in person to voice your concerns about the AHCA builds awareness and holds representatives accountable in a public forum. This accountability trickles into legislative action. To find events in your area, check out social media and newsletters from activist groups in your community.



## 5. GO TO A TOWN HALL, BRING A GROUP!



Town halls provide an opportunity to speak directly to your representatives and make a statement. Come prepared with signs and talking points and bring along your fellow activists. Find a town hall near you: <https://townhallproject.com/>

## 6. SCHEDULE A LOBBY MEETING WITH YOUR SENATORS



Lobby meetings put a face to your issue and give you the chance to speak truth to power. Meeting with a representative or a member of their staff helps to shape their opinion.

## 7. LEARN MORE AND INFORM OTHERS ABOUT THE AHCA



Knowledge is power! Check out the National Action Program's ACA and AHCA Toolkit for information on how the AHCA hurts women. Share with your fellow activists!

## 8. MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media is a powerful tool to make your voice heard. **Tweet at your representatives to ask that they vote "NO" on the AHCA** and to share your health care story! Below are sample tweets and twitter handles for Senators who are still undecided on this disastrous legislation.

Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) @senrobportman  
Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) @lisamurkowski  
Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) @SenatorCollins  
Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA) @BillCassidy

Hey, @\_\_\_\_\_ don't forget about your constituents: supporting the AHCA will remove health care for millions people.

The AHCA guts Medicaid, leaving millions without health coverage. Is this what you want for your constituents @ \_\_\_\_\_.

The AHCA leaves the elderly,  
low-income workers,  
and women  
**VULNERABLE**

Call your Member of Congress at  
844-432-0883  
and tell them to vote "NAY" on the AHCA

#ProtectOurCare

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JUSTICE**



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# OPPOSE TRUMPCARE: CONTACT YOUR SENATORS!



## CALL THEM!



**CALL: 202-224-3121**

### Senate Democrats:

*Hello, my name is [name] and my zip code is [zip code]. I am calling to ask [name of Senator] demand transparency around the American Health Care Act. This bill provides tax cuts for the privileged few, while devastating millions of lives. As our representative it is your duty to protect our care. In doing so, I strongly urge you to **withhold consent** with consideration to this disastrous bill.*

### Senate Republicans:

*Hello, my name is [name] and my zip code is [zip code]. I am calling to urge [name of Senator] to oppose the AHCA. This bill will have a devastating impact on women, throwing millions off their health insurance, defunding Planned Parenthood, and decimating Medicaid for nearly 14 million! We see which representatives continue to throw away our health care. Women are watching and we will remember in November when we go to the polls.*

## TEXT THEM!



**TEXT 'RESIST' TO 50409**

*Senator \_\_\_\_\_, it has come to my attention that the Senate is moving forward with the AHCA. This bill provides tax cuts for the privileged few, while devastating millions. It is your duty to protect our care. In doing so, I strongly urge you to withhold consent with consideration to this disastrous bill. Sit on the right side of history and fight the AHCA.*

## EMAIL THEM!



### **NOW'S NATIONAL ACTION SENATOR EMAIL**

NOW's NA Program has created a handy email template for constituents to contact their Senators and demand they vote stand against the AHCA! Click the laptop above or go to [now.org/nap/reproductive-justice](http://now.org/nap/reproductive-justice).

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# THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT: SEPARATING MYTH FROM FACT



**MYTH: THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT HAS FAILED.**

**FACT: THE ACA HAS LIVED UP TO ITS PROMISE.**

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) has lived up to its promise of affordable health care coverage for individuals who have historically been uninsured due to socio-economic inequality. The American Health Care Act (AHCA) undoes this progress and pushes the burden of health care payment back on the most marginalized constituents.

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**MYTH: THE ACA IS CAUSING THE COST OF HEALTHCARE TO INCREASE, THIS WILL ONLY GET WORSE.**

**FACT: THE CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE (CBO) REPORTED THAT THE ACA WILL STABILIZE IN THE CURRENT MARKET.**

As the average cost of premiums lowers under the ACA, relatively healthy people will continue to buy health insurance, effectively stabilizing the market and lowering the cost of health insurance for all constituents. This counters the myth that current health care policy is destined to fail without legislative intervention and policy change, thus eliminating the GOP's mandate to repeal and replace the ACA.

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**MYTH: THE AHCA WILL CONTINUE TO PROTECT THE "MOST VULNERABLE."**

**FACT: THE AHCA WOULD LEAVE 23 MILLION PEOPLE WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE.**

According to the CBO, the loss of health care coverage under the AHCA plan stems from gutting Medicaid for low-income people. Coverage would also be lost in part because insurance would become unaffordable for millions as subsidies are withdrawn. This will directly and negatively impact the most vulnerable individuals, who will likely be without coverage.

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# HOW THE AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT IMPACTS WOMEN



## OVERVIEW

In the 115th Congress, Republican lawmakers are prioritizing the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). On March 24th, the American Health Care Act (AHCA) did not have the votes to pass in the U.S. House of Representatives. With the addition of amendments that appealed to the far-right of the Republican Party, the AHCA passed in the House of Representatives on May 5th. These amendments made the AHCA even worse for women.

Currently, the bill language is being negotiated in the U.S. Senate in preparation for a vote. The GOP has had their sights set on repealing the ACA since 2010. It is time to hold our lawmakers accountable and fight back against this anti-woman legislation.

## HOW THE ACA BENEFITS WOMEN

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 preventive care without copays or deductibles. Annually, the ACA saves women 1.4 billion dollars in birth control copays. If the ACA is repealed, many women will have to pay out of pocket for birth control, making it less accessible and costlier.

## HOW THE AHCA HURTS WOMEN

The American Health Care Act not only seeks to strip access to affordable birth control, but also limit affordable access to annual exams, contraception, screening for sexually transmitted infections, and counseling for domestic and intimate partner violence. These provisions are part of the ACA's ten Essential Health Benefits. The amended version of the AHCA empowers states to opt out of these essential health benefits to cut costs at the price of women's lives.

## BEING A WOMAN IS A PRE-EXISTING CONDITION

Even worse, the AHCA allows insurers to treat sexual assault, domestic violence, postpartum depression, pregnancy, and Caesarean sections as preexisting conditions. Before the ACA, insurers classified the effects of these experiences as pre-existing conditions, charging women who have had these experiences more or denying coverage entirely. Because of the recently passed House-version of the AHCA, it's possible insurers may do so again.

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These provisions have the potential to impact a large portion of women---some of whom have experienced sexual and physical trauma and violence. About 32% of mothers have had a C-section. One in six women are victims of sexual assault, while 30% have experienced some form of domestic abuse.

Essentially, healthcare providers could tell survivors of sexual assault that because they suffer from PTSD and/ or have an STI as a result of their trauma, they are too expensive to cover. This will not only impact women who have experienced trauma, but also discourage reporting of sexual assault and domestic violence. That makes preserving the ACA not only an issue of healthcare, but an issue of justice.

## THE AHCA: A WOMEN'S ISSUE

 <p><b>55 MILLION WOMEN</b> HAVE ACCESS TO PREVENTIVE CARE WITHOUT COPAYS OR DEDUCTIBLES, <b>THE AHCA COULD REMOVE THAT CARE.</b></p>	<p><b>THE AHCA'S PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS MANDATE WILL REMOVE COVERAGE FOR...</b></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><div><p>THE <b>32%</b> OF MOTHERS WHO HAVE HAD A C-SECTION</p></div><div><p>THE <b>30%</b> OF WOMEN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED A FORM OF DOMESTIC ABUSE.</p></div></div>
<p><b>THE AHCA GUTS MEDICAID LEAVING 17 MILLION WOMEN VULNERABLE.</b></p> 	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: center; align-items: center;"><p>THE <b>1 IN 6</b> WOMEN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL ASSAULT</p></div>

### NOW'S ACTION AGENDA:

- Vote "NO" on the AHCA.
- 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.

