



July 27, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

As the Senate nears a vote on health care legislation that would impact tens of millions of people, many of whom are the most vulnerable of our fellow citizens, the American Academy of Family Physicians feels compelled to once again call on the United States Senate to set-aside this reckless path and seek bipartisan, meaningful, and impactful solutions that improve our health care system.

It is irrefutable that one of the strongest indicators of health and well-being is health care coverage. There is a sound base of literature that proves this the world over, including in the United States. We also know that health security, along with food and housing security, are the foundations of economic mobility in our society. One of the best ways to ensure that our population is productive and economically stable is to ensure that they have affordable health care coverage.

We have stated countless times that the Affordable Care Act was not a perfect law, it needs and deserves our attention. It is clear that premiums and especially deductibles are placing a tremendous strain on individuals and families. We should all commit ourselves to working on lowering costs in our system. Sadly, the proposal under consideration in the Senate fails this standard.

The American Health Care Act (AHCA), the Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA), or the so-called “skinny repeal” all share common and troubling elements – they will cause massive loss of coverage, destabilize our insurance markets, and cause a spike in premiums for millions of individuals who purchase their insurance through the individual market. Concerns about these proposals have been raised from all corners of our health care system. Physicians, hospitals, patient groups, and even the insurance companies have issued stern warnings about the negative impact these policies would have on individuals, our health care system, and our economy. To date, they have largely been ignored or dismissed.

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As we approach the final hours of the Senate's process, the AAFP once again calls on the Senate to reject this flawed proposal. We should reform our health care system to improve the health and well-being of our fellow citizens. We should identify ways to lower premiums and deductibles. We should find ways to help our most vulnerable populations. We should find ways to make access to health care more equitable for all citizens, regardless of their geographic location. We should do all of these things and more, but this is the wrong approach. We should strive to do better than this flawed proposal. The AAFP implores you to reject this approach and this legislation. Vote no.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wanda D. Filer, MD". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Wanda D. Filer, MD, MBA, FAAFP
Board Chair

C: United States Senators