

American Cancer Society  
Cancer Action Network  
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May 3, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is deeply concerned about the reports of additional amendments to the American Health Care Act (AHCA), including one that would allegedly add \$8 billion in new spending for state high-risk pools. This amendment is particularly egregious because it would further incent states to apply for waivers from current-law market rules that protect patients with pre-existing conditions.

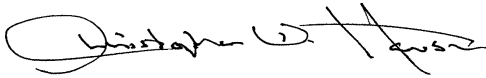
Historically, state high-risk pools have fallen short of providing coverage of prevention, treatment and follow-up care for cancer patients and survivors. Segmenting people with cancer and other serious illnesses away from the private marketplace and into high-risk pools absent an adequate and permanent source of public funding has never been an adequate solution.

Between 1976 and 2010, 35 states created high-risk pools to cover individuals who could not otherwise purchase insurance in the private market, usually because of a pre-existing condition. Every one of those risk pools experienced net operating losses year after year. Furthermore, high-risk pools did not result in lower premiums. All of them set premiums above the non-group market average or standard rate in the state, usually by 150-200 percent. Only a few states provided additional premium assistance for low-income individuals, leaving many who could not afford premiums priced out of the program. Most states also imposed waiting periods before covering pre-existing conditions. An individual with a prior cancer diagnosis often had to wait 6-12 months before the high-risk pool would cover the costs associated with cancer treatment or follow-up survivorship care. Most states imposed limitations on coverage with either lifetime or annual limits. And most plans offered deductibles of \$1,000 or higher. Neither AHCA, nor the new amendment would fully protect patients from any of those conditions.

Cancer patients and survivors need insurance coverage that is affordable, readily accessible, and protects them from pre-existing condition exclusions, annual and lifetime caps on coverage and extraordinary out-of-pocket costs. Past experience has shown that high-risk pools failed to meet these basic needs, yet still were a drain on state budgets.

As we have indicated in our earlier letters, there are reasonable fixes that could be made to the current law. We stand ready to work with you to develop policies that improve the law and encourage a robust health insurance market that provides affordable and comprehensive coverage options.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher W. Hansen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a distinct "H".

Christopher W. Hansen  
President