



September 4, 2018

Dear Candidate,

As we approach the 2018 congressional races, whoever is elected must be a lawmaker who makes health coverage a priority. That is why cancer patients, survivors and their loved ones are launching *The Medi-Cal Promise* campaign to ask every candidate running for the United States House of Representatives in California to promise to oppose any legislation that the Congressional Budget Office determines would reduce coverage for the Medi-Cal population.

More than 13 million Californians rely on Medi-Cal for health coverage.¹ Medi-Cal is a critical component of our health care system as it provides coverage for low-income Californians most in need including children, pregnant women, seniors, people with disabilities and women screened and diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer through the state's Every Woman Counts program.

The benefits and services provided through Medi-Cal are critical in preventing cancer and catching the disease early, before it advances and rates of survivorship decrease. Medi-Cal coverage spans the cancer continuum – from prevention and early detection to diagnostic and treatment services through cancer survivorship or end-of-life care, all of which are important in the fight against cancer. The care provided to low-income Californians includes comprehensive tobacco cessation services and cancer screenings and treatments including Pap tests, mammograms, radiation and chemotherapy. They also include second opinions after a cancer diagnosis to ensure the correct course of therapy and cover experimental treatments and clinical trials.

The biggest determining factor whether someone lives or dies after a cancer diagnosis is whether or not they have health insurance. In fact, studies have shown that after a cancer diagnosis, those without insurance are 60 percent more likely to die than those with insurance.² Last year, the U.S. House of Representatives narrowly passed the American Health Care Act of 2017—H.R. 1628 (AHCA) that would have phased out Medicaid expansion and capped annual federal funding for Medi-Cal. Fortunately, the U.S. Senate halted AHCA in its tracks. Had the AHCA become law, as many as 3.7 million fewer Californians would have been enrolled in Medi-Cal.³ The state would have lost \$22 billion in annual funding for Medi-Cal by 2027.⁴ The state's health care system would have lost a cumulative total of \$130 billion in state and federal Medi-Cal funding between 2020 and 2027.⁵

California Office

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Enclosed in this correspondence is a form we are asking every candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives in California to sign. Simply e-mail, fax or snap a photo of a signed copy and send back to ACS CAN at 1029 J Street, Suite 450, Sacramento, CA 95814 or 916-447-6931 (fax) or tim.gibbs@cancer.org. We will publicize the results through media and on our website. All candidates were given an August deadline to reply. Though that initial deadline has passed, we are still asking candidates to accept the Medi-Cal promise, and will continue to publish their responses.

Sincerely,

Tim Gibbs
Senior Director, Government Relations—California
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

¹ State of California, Department of Health Care Services. Medi-Cal Certified Eligible Data Tables by Aid Category and Legislative Districts - January 2017 Month of Enrollment. Report date: February 2018.

² Ward E, Halpern M, Schrag N, et al. "Association of Insurance with Cancer Care Utilization and Outcomes." *Cancer J. for Clinicians*. 2008; 58(1): 9-31

³ Lucia L, Jacobs K, and Bindman A. Medi-Cal Expansion under AHCA: Severe Coverage and Funding Loss unless State Backfills Billions in Federal Cuts. UC Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education, March 2017.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.