



American Cancer Society
Cancer Action Network
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December 8, 2016

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

The Honorable Harry Reid
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Democratic Leader-Elect
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

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

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leaders Pelosi, McConnell, Reid and Leader-Elect Schumer:

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN), the nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society (Society) asks that you carefully consider the impact on the health care of millions of cancer patients, survivors and their families as you consider legislative proposals to replace and repeal the current health law. For years, millions of cancer patients and survivors could not get or keep health insurance coverage simply because of their medical condition. Millions more did not have access to critical preventive services that could have made a difference in their prognosis.

The Society's peer-reviewed scientific research has shown that uninsured and underinsured people are more likely than those with insurance to be diagnosed with cancer at a more advanced stage when treatment is costlier and patients are more likely to die from the disease.

We strongly urge that any replacement of the current law build on or improve current protections for patients. There are several key protections for cancer patients and survivors that must not be lost including:

- Assuring their ability to purchase affordable, comprehensive health insurance coverage;
- Providing no- or low-cost coverage for lifesaving, evidence-based prevention and early detection services, such as screening mammograms and colonoscopies;
- Enabling young adults to stay on their parents' health plan until age 26;
- Preventing patients from having their existing coverage canceled when they get sick;

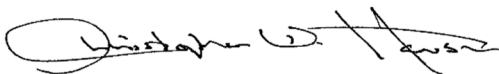
- Prohibiting patients from being denied health coverage because they have a pre-existing condition such as cancer;
- Preventing patients from being charged more for health insurance because of their health status;
- Prohibiting annual and lifetime dollar limits on coverage that can cut off needed care for patients with cancer;
- Providing individuals and families with lower incomes meaningful opportunities to acquire affordable and adequate health insurance;
- Reasonably limiting the amount patients must pay in out-of-pocket costs and deductibles;
- Ensuring seniors have consistent prescription drug coverage that allows them to afford the medications they need; and
- Eliminating disparities in prevention and treatment of cancer among our nation's most vulnerable by ensuring comprehensive, affordable coverage is available in every state either through Medicaid or cost-sharing assistance.

More than 20 million individuals including many cancer patients and survivors now have insurance facilitated by current law. Any replacement plan should stabilize and hopefully increase the number of insured Americans. Delaying enactment of a replacement for two or three years, and leaving insurers without any certainty in projecting risk, could lead to the collapse of the individual health insurance market with long-term consequences.

ACS CAN intends to work with lawmakers to ensure that those affected by cancer maintain their insurance coverage, and find appropriate ways to help those who are currently uninsured gain coverage that includes recommended cancer care. In that respect, we know that you want to do what is in the best interest of your constituents who face cancer and other serious illnesses.

Thank you for your consideration of these concerns. We stand ready to work with you to ensure that replacement precedes repeal and benefits people with cancer and their families.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Hansen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Chris Hansen
President