

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Leslie Dach and Brad Woodhouse, Protect Our Care

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RE: Donald Trump Is an Existential Threat to Our Health Care

Introduction

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) and its protections for millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions are once again on the ballot. MAGA Republicans are trying to turn back the clock and throw millions of people off their health care. After [more than 50 failed attempts](#) to repeal the ACA, Donald Trump and his allies in Congress are still committed to increasing health care costs by dismantling the law through legislation and through the courts. Trump's running mate JD Vance [has repeatedly](#) called for [gutting](#) protections for people with pre-existing conditions. And just a week before the election, MAGA House Speaker Johnson [put it bluntly](#): "no Obamacare."

Time and again, Trump and MAGA Republicans have made clear plans for American health care: they are going to fight tooth and nail to repeal and sabotage the ACA and Inflation Reduction Act, slash Medicaid and Medicare funding, take away protections for pre-existing conditions, raise prescription drug and premium costs, and strip away health care from millions of Americans. The threat that the ACA faces is the same, if not greater, than in 2016, and this election will make all the difference for the health and well-being of the American people.

Even if Trump doesn't succeed at fully repealing the ACA, he will stop at nothing to gut it and other critical protections that the American people rely on. According to the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), "While the proposals do not present themselves as repealing the ACA, the results would be much the same: higher costs for health coverage, loss of protections for people with pre-existing conditions, and an increase in the number of people without insurance." If Trump gets his way, millions of Americans will lose access to critical care they need to stay healthy, disproportionately impacting people of color, the LGBTQ+ community, seniors, women, and people with disabilities.

Remembering Trump's First Term: A Disaster For U.S. Health Care

We know who Trump is – he showed us when he was president. Under his administration, drug prices skyrocketed, millions of Americans lost their health insurance coverage, and Republicans gave billions in tax breaks to drug and insurance companies and their CEOs. In 2017, Trump was just one vote short of total ACA repeal, and he did everything in his power to sabotage the law. He also dismantled reproductive rights and exacerbated the nation's maternal mortality crisis. Trump himself says that he is the one responsible for "[killing Roe v. Wade](#)."

Importantly, when Donald Trump was president, he succeeded in [weakening and undermining](#) the ACA even without repealing it. Through deliberate sabotage, his administration weakened

protections for people with pre-existing conditions, made it harder to enroll in affordable coverage, and raised health care costs for millions of people. A [recent study](#) found that Republican hostility toward affordable health care led 3 million fewer people to enroll in coverage between 2014 and 2019, which increased average premiums by nearly 3 percent.

Now, Trump is lying about his unpopular record. Despite allowing drug companies to charge whatever they want, he is [trying to take credit](#) for the Inflation Reduction Act's insulin cap. He is claiming he doesn't know "anything" about Project 2025, in spite of the fact that [at least 140](#) former members of his administration wrote the plan. For years, Trump has lied and promised that he will "protect your Medicare and your Medicaid." Under Trump's first term, more than [one million](#) children lost Medicaid coverage between 2017 and 2019.

A second Trump term will see a [renewed war](#) on Medicaid as laid out in "Project 2025," which includes onerous paperwork requirements and block grants that would force radical cuts to Medicaid. Trump supports raising the retirement age under Medicare, stripping away benefits for future retirees, and cutting tens of billions of dollars from the Medicare budget. Trump wants to fully repeal the Inflation Reduction Act, which will stop Medicare from negotiating lower drug prices for seniors, raise drug prices for seniors, and hike the cost of health insurance premiums. He would push an extreme agenda to take away access to contraception and pass a national abortion ban.

We must take Trump's threats to American health care seriously. Trump's plan to gut health care will only take us backwards and throw the entire health care system into chaos. This is personal for Trump – he wants to get back at John McCain and Barack Obama and other political enemies – but we know the Republican party will follow him until the bitter end.

The Contrast Is Clear

- **The Affordable Care Act:** Democrats want to protect and strengthen the Affordable Care Act, while Republicans want to repeal it, throwing millions off their health care, taking away protections for pre-existing conditions and raising prices.
- **Prescription Drug Prices:** Democrats want to build on the drug pricing reforms they already have passed to lower drug prices for all Americans. Meanwhile, Republicans are continuing to side with drug industry lobbyists by trying to stop Medicare from negotiating lower prices.
- **Medicare:** Democrats are committed to protecting and strengthening Medicare, while Republicans want to cut Medicare and raise the retirement age.
- **Medicaid:** Democrats are committed to ensuring access to affordable care for all Americans, but Republicans want to make extreme cuts to Medicaid that would take health care away from millions of Americans.

The ACA More Than Coverage

It is important to remember that the ACA is more than just coverage for 45 million Americans: millions more benefit from its savings and protections. The ACA touches nearly every household in the country. For example, if the ACA is repealed, over [135 million](#) Americans with pre-existing conditions would lose critical protections, [50 million](#) seniors would have to pay more for prescription drugs, and insurance companies would not be required to cover preventative care, such as vaccinations, contraception, and cancer screening. **If the Affordable Care Act is repealed or sabotaged:**

- **GONE:** Protections for [135 million](#) Americans with pre-existing conditions, including [54 million](#) people with a pre-existing condition that would make them completely uninsurable.
- **GONE:** Medicaid expansion, which covers [more than 22 million](#) people.
- **GONE:** Quality, affordable coverage that over [15.5 million](#) people who buy insurance on their own.
- **GONE:** [2.3 million](#) adult children will no longer be able to stay on their parents' insurance.
- **GONE:** Ban on insurance companies charging women [more](#) than men.
- **GONE:** Ban on insurance companies having annual and lifetime caps on coverage.
- **GONE:** Requirements that insurance companies cover prescription drugs and maternity care.
- **GONE:** Premium tax credits that make premiums affordable for [80 percent](#) of people who purchase health care on the Marketplace.
- **GONE:** Closing the Medicare 'donut hole,' which helps [49 million](#) seniors pay less for prescription drugs.
- **GONE:** Critical funding for rural hospitals.
- **GONE:** Policies that help [61.5 million](#) people on Medicare have lower costs and better medical care.

Trump Can and Will Take Affordable Health Care Away From Millions Without Full Repeal (And Even Without Legislation)

For years, President Trump and Republicans in Congress have [waged a war](#) on American health care, and they want to do it again. Even if he doesn't call it repeal, Trump can build on his previous policies to gut the law and achieve the same goals as repeal. Just as he did in his first term, Trump could shorten the ACA's open enrollment period, defund health care Navigators, and make it harder for families to enroll. He could revisit his policies to promote work reporting requirements and block grants to throw millions of people off of Medicaid. The Trump Justice Department could fail to defend the ACA in ongoing lawsuits and further erode the law. Trump's plan to bring back junk plans that do not need to cover pre-existing conditions would undermine the Marketplace and raise costs across the board.

Online Resources

[Health Care Under Threat: Ten Ways Trump Would Sabotage Americans' Health Care In A Second Term](#)

[Reminder: MAGA Republicans Want to Raise Costs and Rip Away Health Care](#)

[Fact Sheet: Speaker Johnson Confirms, Health Care is Under Attack and All Americans are at Risk](#)

[ROUNDUP: Vance's Shameless Lies on Health Care During the Debate Sent Fact-Checkers Into a Tailspin](#)