



United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice urges you to vote NO on the American Health Care Act (AHCA). This legislation fails to protect access to quality, affordable healthcare for vulnerable communities. It would widen the gaps in our society by making massive cuts to Medicaid, giving large tax breaks to the very wealthiest families and corporations, and threatening the health security of American families.

Our faith teaches that **access to healthcare is an essential human right** that is necessary to protect the life and dignity of every person. The bill would drastically increase the number of people without health insurance –and I know that behind those numbers are millions of stories of families facing medical bankruptcy, forgoing treatment, and losing loved ones who could have been saved by preventative care.

The AHCA cuts Medicaid spending –an essential source of care for millions of children, seniors, people with disabilities, and people experiencing poverty in our nation – and a per-capita cap would force states to ration care. The legislation would also increase costs for older and sicker patients and burden low- and moderate-income families with much higher premiums by cutting \$312 billion of financial assistance for people purchasing health insurance on the individual market. **This is far from the Gospel mandate to care for our most vulnerable sisters and brothers.**

For any replacement to the ACA to be sufficient, it must meet these 10 conditions – a **Ten Commandments of Healthcare** if you will – and the AHCA breaks nine of 10 commandments:

1. Thou shalt provide affordable insurance and the same benefits to all currently covered under the Affordable Care Act. *AHCA fails.*
2. Thou shalt continue to allow children under the age of 26 to be covered by their parents' insurance.
3. Thou shalt ensure that insurance premiums and cost sharing are truly affordable to all. *AHCA fails.*
4. Thou shalt expand Medicaid to better serve vulnerable people in our nation. *AHCA fails.*
5. Thou shalt not undercut the structure or undermine the purpose of Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and Medicare funding. *AHCA fails.*
6. Thou shalt create effective mechanisms of accountability for insurance companies and not allow them to have annual or lifetime caps on expenditures. *AHCA partial fail.*
7. Thou shalt not allow insurance companies to discriminate against those with pre-existing conditions. *AHCA partial fail.*
8. Thou shalt not allow insurance companies to discriminate against women, the elderly, and people in poverty. *AHCA fails.*
9. Thou shalt provide adequate assistance for people enrolling and using their health coverage. *AHCA fails.*



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10. Thou shalt continue to ensure reasonable revenue is in the federal budget to pay for life-sustaining healthcare for all. *AHCA fails.*

At its heart, this bill has lost sight of community and the common good. Its biggest problem is that it lacks the awareness that it is community which makes healthcare effective. Healthcare is not just about the individual—it is a communal good. The hyper individualism evident in the AHCA is sucking the life out of our nation. Just focusing on one's individual self is contrary to our Catholic faith and contrary to our Constitution. We will track the vote and score it in our 2017 voting record.

This dangerous legislation is not the faithful way forward and must be rejected. Stand by Gospel principles and vote NO on the AHCA.

Sincerely,

Sr. Simone Campbell, SSS
Executive Director
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice