

Talking Points for Senate's Path Forward

The U.S. Senate, after two setbacks on advancing legislation to repeal the ACA and gut Medicaid, continues their march toward the unknown. One thing we all know is that repeal is repeal, regardless of the plan being cooked up by Sen. McConnell behind closed doors.

Below you will find two sets of talking points, one for our grassroots networks and the other for use with policymakers and the media.

Policymakers/Media talking points:

- Senate Republicans are marketing their latest plan as a “skinny” repeal bill, but it is really a classic ‘bait and switch’ that breaks their promises to lower premiums, increase access and offer more insurance options.
- ”Skinny” repeal is repeal – it would strip health insurance away from millions, raise premiums and likely lead to a true death spiral in the insurance marketplaces. A skinny repeal would:
 - Force 15 million people off of their health insurance in 2018, including an estimated 82,660 in Maine, 29,720 in Alaska and 71,960 in West Virginia.
 - Increase premiums in the individual market next year by 20 percent on average.
 - Lead to a death spiral in the insurance market as younger, healthy individuals leave the market leaving behind those who are older and sicker.
- The current plan requires senators to vote blindly for a bill that is a bait and switch for something far worse.
 - It will go directly to conference committee, allowing Mitch McConnell and Paul Ryan to use it to resurrect provisions of prior bills that gut Medicaid, cause millions to lose coverage, increase costs and rollback consumer protections to finance tax breaks for the wealthiest and corporations.
 - It will get no public hearings and no expert or public input.
- Senators should instead defeat any version of repeal that surfaces this week, return to regular order and work in a bipartisan manner to find solutions. There is a path forward in reining in prescription drug prices, stabilize the individual market and protect Medicaid.

Talking points/Messaging for grassroots use in calls/action:

- “Skinny” is repeal – it would strip health insurance away from millions, raise premiums and likely lead to a true death spiral in the insurance marketplaces.

- Skinny repeal is just a bait and switch for a repeal bill that could get far worse. It breaks their promises to lower premiums, increase access and offer more insurance options
- Tell your senators you don't want them to pass any repeal bill that will allow Sen. McConnell and Speaker Ryan to fill in the details, drafting in secret a final bill that will strip health insurance from millions, gut Medicaid and roll back consumer protections and give tax breaks to big corporations and the wealthy.
- Senators should instead defeat any version of repeal that surfaces this week, return to regular order and work in a bipartisan manner to find solutions. There is a path forward in reining in prescription drug prices, stabilize the individual market and protect Medicaid.