



# COALITION ON HUMAN NEEDS

1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW · Suite 312 · Washington, DC 20036 · 202.223.2532 · Fax 202.223.2538 · [www.chn.org](http://www.chn.org)

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**CONTACT:** David Elliot, [delliot@chn.org](mailto:delliot@chn.org)

202-223-2532 (office) 202-607-7036 (cell)

## **CHN SAYS ACA REPEAL LEGISLATION WILL END HEALTH COVERAGE FOR MILLIONS WHILE GIVING \$300 BILLION IN TAX CUTS TO THE RICH**

*Deborah Weinstein, Executive Director of the Coalition on Human Needs, issued the following statement Tuesday in response to the House legislation to repeal the Affordable Care Act:*

“The House legislation to repeal the Affordable Care Act would carry out a stunning attack on health care for low- and moderate-income people, ending coverage for millions of Americans. The legislation will phase out Medicaid coverage for people slightly over the poverty line and dismantle the core Medicaid program. People with modest incomes now getting health coverage through the exchanges will see their costs soaring unaffordably. Standards of care will be eroded. Children, seniors, working families, people with disabilities will all be hurt by the restrictions in the bills. Who is helped? The richest Americans. Their gains are breathtaking: \$300 billion in tax cuts estimated over the next ten years. According to the [Tax Policy Center](#), the wealthiest one-tenth of one percent of earners will gain on average more than \$195,000 each. Drug and medical device companies gain; so do health insurance firms.

“It is heartbreaking to see life-saving progress reversed. The 11 million low-income Americans who were able to get health insurance through the Medicaid expansion will eventually lose that coverage if states are unable to assume large cost increases. They will not find affordable insurance through the exchanges, which will provide low-income people with tax credits worth thousands of dollars less per person than the Affordable Care Act’s subsidies. Millions more will be priced out of the market, or will resort to the bad-old-days of plans with inadequate coverage.

“Make no mistake: the changes to the Medicaid program are extreme and harsh. We are now benefiting from Medicaid’s coverage of treatment for those afflicted by the opioid epidemic; if there is an outbreak of virulent bird flu or other disaster, Medicaid will respond. The bill would cap expenditures, leaving states to find the extra funds. Caps on Medicaid spending will place a large new burden on states, and that burden will grow over time, whether or not they have adopted the Medicaid expansion. All state residents will pay as states grapple with their new burden, but when states cut back on community-based care or other services because of less federal support, the losses for people with disabilities, seniors, and many others may be life-threatening.

“The impact of these plans is not just heartbreaking – we should be outraged that the drafters care more about whopping tax cuts for high-income stock market traders, and health insurance and drug companies than they do about maintaining and strengthening coverage for many millions of people. The drafters were content to drop coverage for low-wage workers, but they took the time to end a tax on tanning salons.

“House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Brady [said this](#): ‘We dismantle Obamacare’s damaging taxes and mandates so states can deliver quality, affordable options based on what their patient populations need, and workers and families can have the freedom and flexibility to make their own health care choices.’ The taxes they are slashing are fair ways to pay for health insurance. The legislation still penalizes people who don’t buy health insurance, but directs the payment to insurance companies. States will have less money to provide health care to low-income and vulnerable people, so its new flexibility will only be in new ways to cut services or deny eligibility. As for workers and families, their new choices will be to pay more for less. Congress should reject this damaging reversal of the progress we’ve made.”

*The Coalition on Human Needs is made up of more than 100 national organizations including faith groups, service providers, policy experts, labor, civil rights and other advocates concerned with meeting the needs of low-income and vulnerable people.*