

# THE REALITY OF REPEAL

*Protect Our Care | February 9, 2017*

Repealing the Affordable Care Act has been at the top of the Republican agenda for seven years. Seven years.

But two weeks past their own deadline to introduce draft repeal language, the legislative disarray is getting worse by the day. Here's where we are right now:

No GOP consensus on a replacement plan;  
No agreement on a timeline for a replacement plan;  
No consensus on how to pay for it;  
No agreement on whether there should even be a replacement.

With their health and financial security hanging in the balance, the American people, however, are having an easier time finding consensus. That's why the popularity of the ACA is higher than ever and why they roundly reject any attempt to repeal the law without a plan to replace it.

Phone lines in Republican offices have been overwhelmed with incoming calls. People are showing up at town halls. There are demonstrations across the country.

And it's having an impact. More and more Republicans are saying they cannot support repealing the ACA without knowing what will take its place.

In short, what happened was that the reality of what it means to repeal the Affordable Care Act finally caught up with the rhetoric of all the easy, partisan promises of killing the ACA. It turns out that repealing a law that 20 million people have relied on to gain health coverage, that doubled in dollar terms the size of the individual market and that impacts nearly 20 percent of the U.S. economy is much easier said than done.

The stakes are high, with millions of jobs and the lives and livelihoods of countless families on the line. Leaked audio from the Republican retreat in Philadelphia showed growing concern among congressional leaders about the path they are on. They should be concerned. They now own every percentage increase in the uninsured rate, every increase in premium costs and every outcome if people in America can't access the health care they deserve.

## **The Reality: "Repeal and Replace" was a Slogan in Search of a Policy**

Since the Affordable Care Act was signed into law, Republicans have vowed to "repeal and replace" it. Now that Republicans control the White House and both chambers of Congress, we learn "repeal and replace" was nothing more than a slogan. Seven years later, they still do not have a replacement plan.

**Senate Republicans Came Up With The Slogan "Repeal And Replace" But Still Do Not Have A Consensus Alternative.** "Many conservatives were simply advocating a vow to repeal the new law, but Republican strategists worried that pressing for repeal without an alternative could backfire. So they batted around a few ideas before Josh Holmes, then a top communications adviser to Mr. McConnell, tossed out the nicely alliterative phrase 'repeal and replace.' That seemed

to do the job, with its promise to get rid of the new law detested by Republicans while suggesting that something better would follow...As it turns out, producing the slogan turned out to be far easier than producing an actual replacement. Almost seven years later, congressional Republicans are still struggling to settle on a consensus alternative to the [health care law](#), endangering their push to quickly undo and then redo the signature Obama administration achievement, which turned out to be a springboard to a Republican political resurgence.” [New York Times, [1/15/17](#)]

## The Reality: People Across America Reject Repealing the ACA Without a Replacement

As it stands, congressional Republicans have not coalesced around an alternative to replace the Affordable Care Act, Yet, they are going down a path to repeal the law anyway, and fill in the replacement details at a later date. Across the nation, people overwhelmingly reject that approach with large majorities opposed to repealing the law without a replacement.

**Quinnipiac Poll: 84 Percent Do Not Want To Repeal The ACA Until There Is A Replacement In Place.** [Quinnipiac University, [1/27/17](#)]

**Fox News Poll: 82 Percent Say The ACA Should Be Repealed Only After A Replacement Is In Place.** Only 17 percent said the law should be repealed immediately. [Fox News Poll, [1/19/17](#)]

**Kaiser Health Tracking Poll: Three Quarters Oppose Repealing The ACA Without A Plan To Replace It.** Only one in five people support repealing the law alone. [Kaiser Family Foundation, [1/6/17](#)]

**More Than Two-Thirds Of Voters In Key States Oppose Efforts To Repeal The ACA Without A Replacement.** State surveys conducted by Public Policy Polling on behalf of the Alliance for Healthcare Security underscore widespread voter opposition to partisan efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act without a replacement plan, with more than two-thirds of voters in each state opposing repeal without a replacement plan. The percentage of voters that agree that before tearing anything down, Congress should show us their plan to replace our health care, including how they lower costs, keep people covered, and protect people with preexisting conditions:

- Alaska: 77%
- Arizona: 80%
- Maine: 82%
- Nevada: 76%
- Tennessee: 67%
- West Virginia: 79%

[Alliance for Healthcare Security Press Release, 1/12/17]

Moreover, while people oppose repeal without a replacement, they view the Affordable Care Act more favorably.

**NBC/WSJ Poll: The ACA Is Becoming More Popular, Getting Its Highest Mark Since April 2009, Before The Law Was Passed.** “Americans are starting to warm up to the Affordable Care Act amid concerns about Republicans’ efforts to dismantle it, a new *Wall Street Journal*//NBC News

poll finds. A new *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll finds that 45% of Americans think the 2012 health law is a ‘good idea,’ the highest mark since pollsters began asking about President Barack Obama’s vision for a health overhaul in April, 2009. The finding also marks the first time in *Journal*/NBC polling since the law was enacted that the share of respondents calling it a good idea has been larger than those who see it as a bad idea. That share was 41% in the new poll, down from its high of 50% in late 2013, when problems plaguing the HealthCare.gov website dominated the health debate.” [Wall Street Journal, [1/17/17](#)]

## The Reality: People across America are Making Their Voices Heard

As we have seen the past couple of weeks, people are demanding Congress reveal their plan to replace the Affordable Care Act before repealing the law. Whether by calling their representatives, showing up at a town hall or through peaceful demonstrations, they are making their voices heard. However, some congressional Republicans can’t handle the pressure.

**The Hill Headline: “Republican lawmakers face rising anger at town halls”** [The Hill, [2/7/17](#)]

**Politico Headline: “Republicans face anger over Obamacare repeal during town halls.”**  
[Politico, [2/4/17](#)]

**Rep. Tom McClintock (R-CA) Faced “Fervent Backers” Of The ACA.** “Fervent backers of the health care law shouted down Rep. Tom McClintock (R-Calif.), blasting his views on the Obamacare repeal and President Donald Trump’s immigration ban. Hundreds of demonstrators showed up — some as early as 6:30 a.m. — to a theater in downtown Roseville, just northeast of Sacramento. After the meeting ended, McClintock was escorted by police as the crowd outside the theater shouted ‘Resist!’ and ‘Shame!’” [Politico, [2/4/17](#)]

**Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO) Disconnected His Phone Lines.** Sen. Cory Gardner disconnected his phones lines and his constituents are blocked from leaving messages asking him to save the ACA. [Young Invincibles Tweet, [1/14/17](#)]

**Rep. Mike Coffman (R-CO) Fled His Constituents Under The Guise Of Crime Scene Tape.** Rep. Mike Coffman issued crime scene tape to sneak out of a town meeting when he saw more people showed up than he expected. Afterward, he said, “Yesterday was unfortunate because partisan activists showed up only to disrupt the event I was holding at Aurora Central Library. I have been doing five minute one-on-one constituent meetings for the last five years although I do allow small groups, if they share the same issue concerns. This gives an opportunity for everyone to be heard and not just the loudest voices in the room.” [9News, [1/14/17](#)]

**Constituent To Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL): Repealing The ACA Is “Taking Away My Life.”** “In Pinellas County, Fla., Gus Bilirakis, who represents a district Trump won, was on the defensive as voters packed a town hall on Obamacare. For more than two hours, Bilirakis listened to stories from his constituents — young, old, black and white — who implored him to not repeal the federal health care law without having a replacement ready. ‘To take away the Affordable Care Act is taking away my freedom and justice,’ said Evan Thornton, a 21-year-old St. Petersburg College student who said he was diagnosed with Marfan Syndrome at 16 and has stayed on his mother’s insurance because of Obamacare. ‘It’s taking away my life.’” [Politico, [2/4/17](#)]

**Hundreds Protested Rep. Peter Roskam (R-IL) After He Canceled An ACA Event When He Saw A Reporter Present.** “Hundreds of people gathered in suburban Palatine to protest Rep. Peter Roskam on Saturday morning...Initially open to the public, the meeting was later closed because of high demand, according to the group’s chairman Aaron Del Mar, who said that the office fits 100 people, and more than 110 members attended...The protest came just days after members of Roskam’s staff reportedly canceled a meeting with a group of 16 constituents upon realizing a reporter was present, [according to the Chicago Tribune](#). Roskam later told the Tribune that the meeting, over concerns about a possible repeal of the Affordable Care Act, would be rescheduled without the reporter.” [NBC Chicago, [2/4/17](#)]

**A Rally Outside Rep. John Faso (R-NY)’s Office Urged Him To Condemn The GOP Repeal Of The ACA Without A Replacement Plan.** “Roughly 1,000 people protested outside Republican congressman John Faso’s Kinderhook office and home last Saturday. If the mood that had driven the crowd to the congressman’s doors was grim, the protest itself was a peaceful, even buoyant affair. The protest was roughly ten times the size of a [similar rally outside Faso’s Kingston office the week before](#). Carrying signs that referred to the conservative Republican as ‘One-Term Faso,’ the crowd cheered lustily as speaker after speaker condemned the GOP’s threat to repeal Obamacare without providing an alternative plan...Later, Faso came out to meet the protesters. In one interaction, captured on video (below), a resident tells the congressman that she was being treated for a brain tumor and a spinal condition and, before the passage of the ACA, was denied coverage because of that pre-existing condition. ‘I need you as a human being to promise we will not take this away from you,’ she said through tears. ‘I promise, I promise,’ said Faso, embracing her.” [Hudson Valley One, [2/2/17](#)]

**Sen. James Lankford (R-OK)’s Office Flooded With Calls About People Worried About Losing Their Health Coverage.** “LANKFORD said he is being flooded with calls from sick people anxious about losing insurance.” [Matea Gold Tweet, [1/28/17](#)]

**Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN)’s Office Was Flooded With People Urging Him Not To Repeal The ACA Without A Replacement.** “Tennessee residents flooded Senator Lamar Alexander’s Nashville office in person this week to ask the Republican not to repeal the bill without a replacement. ‘None of us walk into the hospital as a Republican or a Democrat,’ Kristen Grimm, whose son has had 19 surgeries because of a condition he was born with, told Alexander, the Spring Hill Home Page reported. ‘We all enter as human beings seeking mercy and quality health care.’” [Quartz, [1/14/17](#)]

**Rep. Dave Brat (R-VA): “We’re Getting Hammered.”** “Rep. Dave Brat, R-7th, is feeling some political pressure as Republicans in Congress move to repeal the Affordable Care Act. ‘Since Obamacare and these issues have come up, the women are in my grill no matter where I go,’ Brat told an audience Saturday at a meeting of conservative groups at Hanover Tavern. ‘They come up — ‘When is your next town hall?’ And believe me, it’s not to give [positive input](#).’ Brat, R-7th, asked the GOP-friendly audience to get organized. ‘Help us write newspaper articles. We’re getting hammered,’ he said.” [Richmond Times Dispatch, [1/30/17](#)]

**Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-VA) Did Not Show Up At Her Town Halls.** “Rep. Barbara Comstock stood up constituents over the weekend who attended two town halls with questions about an Obamacare repeal and the Trump Administration’s travel ban. The centrist Virginia

Republican invited people in her districts to “mobile office hours” on Saturday at two grocery stores in Lorton and Oakton, Va. The invitation specifically said she’d be there to answer questions about ‘issues important to you.’ But Comstock never showed up, angering dozens of constituents who wanted clarity on the GOP’s plan to replace Obamacare. Others wanted to question her about Trump’s immigration executive order.” [Politico, [2/1/17](#)]

**Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) Was Drowned Out By Shouts Of “Save Our Health Care.”** “Chants of ‘save our health care’ drowned out an address that Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) gave on Martin Luther King Jr. Day.” [Vox, [2/2/17](#)]

## The Reality: More Republican Leaders Say No Repeal Without Replace

Given public opposition to repealing the ACA without a replacement plan and anxiety about the consequences of repeal, it is no wonder more and more Republicans are starting to realize they should not repeal the ACA without a replacement plan, including President Donald Trump.

**President Donald Trump: Repeal And Replace “Could Be The Same Hour.”** Trump: “It’ll be repeal and replace. It will be essentially, simultaneously. It will be various segments, you understand, but will most likely be on the same day or the same week, but probably, the same day, could be the same hour.” [Trump Press Conference, [1/11/17](#)]

**Vice President Mike Pence: Trump Wants “The Congress At The Same Time To Pass A Replacement Bill.”** Pence: “What the president-elect’s made clear is that he also wants the Congress at the same time to pass a replacement bill that will lower the cost of health insurance and literally make health insurance affordable for everyone.” [CNN, [1/10/17](#)]

**Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI): “It Is Our Goal To Bring It All Together Concurrently.”** “It is our goal to bring it all together concurrently,’ Ryan told reporters after meeting with House Republicans behind closed doors. ‘We’re going to use every tool at our disposal through legislation, through regulation, to bring replace concurrent along with repeal, so that we can save people from this mess.’” [The Hill, [1/10/17](#)]

**Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK): “A Repeal And Replace Need To Coincide.”** “With a new administration & new Congress we have an opportunity to fix failures of #Obamacare, but a repeal and replace need to coincide.” [Murkowski Tweet, [1/10/17](#)]

**Sen. Tom Cotton (R-AR): “I Don’t Think We Can Repeal Obamacare And Say We’re Going To Get The Answer Two Years From Now.”** Cotton: “I think when we repeal Obamacare we need to have the solution in place moving forward. Again, that solution may be implemented in a deliberate fashion. But I don’t think we can repeal Obamacare and say we’re going to get the answer two years from now. Look, this is a very complicated problem.” [MSNBC, 1/5/17]

**Sen. John McCain (R-AZ): Repeal And Replace “Have To Be Done Together.”** “The Senate Republican strategy would start the repeal process in early January and could defer the effective date for several years, but not all party members were on board. ‘They have to be done together,’

said Senator [John McCain](#), Republican of Arizona, referring to efforts to repeal and replace the health law. ‘We don’t want to have people left out.’ [New York Times, [12/6/16](#)]

**Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) Said It Was A “Huge Mistake” If Congress Didn’t Vote For A Replacement Bill The Same Day It Voted To Repeal The ACA.** “Paul, a libertarian-leaning Republican, made clear on Wednesday that he does not agree with his colleagues arguing for a repeal-and-delay strategy. ‘We need to think through how we do this, and it’s a huge mistake for Republicans if they do not vote for replacement on the same day as we vote for repeal,’ Paul said.” [Politico, [1/4/17](#)]

**Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME): Immediate Repeal Without A Replacement Is “An Option That I Reject.”** “Collins last week emphasized the importance of repealing and replacing the law at the same time. ‘Some of my colleagues have argued for immediate repeal without any replacement,’ Collins said on the Senate floor, ‘an option that I reject for it risks leaving millions of vulnerable Americans without affordable health insurance and would undo important consumer protections provided by current law.’” [The Hill, [1/23/17](#)]

**Sen. Bob Corker (R-TN): “There’s More And More Concerns About Not Doing It Simultaneously.”** “Corker said he will offer legislation to delay the current date of an Obamacare repeal bill via the budget reconciliation procedure from Jan. 27 until March 3, to give the party more time to craft a health care plan. ‘There’s more and more concerns about not doing it simultaneously,’ Corker said. ‘You would think after six years we would have a pretty good sense of what we would like to do.’” [Politico, [1/9/17](#)]

**House Freedom Caucus Chair Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC): The ACA “Should Be Repealed And Replaced, And All Of That Should Be Done In The 115<sup>th</sup> Congress.”** “The proposal ‘will meet with major resistance from Freedom Caucus members,’ the North Carolina Republican vowed in an interview, calling it ‘the first big fight I see coming for the Freedom Caucus.’ ‘It should be repealed and replaced, and all of that should be done in the 115th Congress’ — the two-year period starting in January through 2018 — and “not left to a future Congress to deal with,’ Meadows added.” [Politico, [12/5/16](#)]

**Rep. Mark Sanford (R-SC): “Repeal Needs To Come With Replace.”** “Repeal needs to come with replace on something as vital as health care...people don’t want a void or uncertainty as to what comes next.” [Sanford Tweet, [2/2/17](#)]

## The Reality: Republicans Can’t Agree on a Timeline

Even as more congressional Republicans seem to agree that “repeal and replace,” however it is defined, should happen at the same time, there still is not a consensus on *when* they should repeal and replace the ACA. The goalposts keep changing.

Some conservatives are adamant that Congress vote on repeal “as soon as possible.”

**Reps. Mark Meadows (R-NC) and Jim Jordan: “We Strongly Encourage” The ACA Reconciliation Repeal Bill Be “Brought To The Floor For Consideration As Soon As Possible.”** “Health care will be better and more affordable once Obamacare is repealed. We

committed to the American people to repeal every tax, every mandate, the regulations, and to defund Planned Parenthood. That's what the American people expect us to do – and they expect us to do it quickly. Therefore we strongly encourage Republican leadership on Capitol Hill to take up the Affordable Care Act repeal bill that already passed the House, the Senate, and went to President Obama's desk in early 2016. There's no reason we should put anything less on President Trump's desk than we put on President Obama's now that we know it will be signed into law. We strongly encourage that this bill be brought to the floor for consideration as soon as possible so we can begin undoing this law that is hurting American families." [Meadows and Jordan Statement, [2/2/17](#)]

In December, the Washington Examiner's Philip Klein said based on his conversations with Hill staff, a repeal bill could be on President Trump's desk as early as February, if all went smoothly.

**Klein: "If All Goes Smoothly, Such A Bill Could Reach Trump's Desk In Short Order, As Early As February."** The plan, then, is to move quickly post-inauguration to pass legislation similar to the one they passed this past January, which was vetoed by Obama. That legislation repealed the law's major spending provisions — ending the Medicaid expansion and getting rid of the subsidies for individuals to purchase insurance on government-run exchanges. In addition, the repeal bill scrapped the individual and employer mandate penalties, eliminated the law's taxes and defunded Planned Parenthood. If all goes smoothly, such a bill could reach Trump's desk in short order, as early as February — or weeks after Inauguration Day. Though it's possible that this could slip as certain details get ironed out, there is a determination, among leadership in both chambers, to move with speed." [Washington Examiner, [12/15/16](#)]

Indeed, when Congress passed its budget resolution, it directed the key committees to draft repeal language by January 27. That did not happen.

**Washington Times: "Republicans miss own deadline to begin repeal of Obamacare."** [Washington Times, [1/29/17](#)]

Last week, Speaker Paul Ryan said his goal is move Obamacare legislation by the end of the end of March. He later said any legislating will be done this year. House Ways and Means chair Kevin Brady agrees with Ryan's timeline. Sen. Cornyn also says he is aiming for March.

**Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI): "We Want To Move Our Obamacare Legislation By The End Of The First Quarter."** Ryan: "The timeline, yeah. So I'll defer to the chairman when he wants to have his markup. But we want -- we want to move our Obamacare legislation by the end of the first quarter." [Speaker Ryan Weekly Press Conference via Real Clear Politics, [2/2/17](#)]

**Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI): "The Legislating Is Going To Be Done This Year."** "I think there's a little confusion here," Ryan said, after being asked about Trump's schedule for a health care bill. "The legislating is going to be done this year. We are going to be done legislating, with respect to health care and Obamacare, this year. The question is, how long does it take to implement the full replacement of Obamacare? And that's why, honestly, we've got to get Tom Price over at HHS, Seema Verma confirmed at CMS, so they can get to work with replacing this collapsing law." [Talking Points Memo, [2/7/17](#)]

**House Ways And Means Chair Kevin Brady (R-TX): Moving Repeal Legislation By The End Of March Is “The Timetable I’m Working Off Of.”** “House Ways and Means Committee Chairman [Kevin Brady](#) (R-Texas) told reporters that he is working off of Speaker [Paul Ryan](#)’s (R-Wis.) timeline of moving repeal legislation by the end of March. ‘That’s the timetable I’m working off of,’ Brady said.” [The Hill, [2/6/17](#)]

**Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-TX): Repeal Bill Will Move “Hopefully In The Next 30 Days Or So.”** “Sen. [John Cornyn](#) (R-Texas), the Senate’s No. 2 Republican, told reporters that a repeal bill under the fast-track process called reconciliation could come up in the Senate even within the next 30 days. ‘Hopefully in the next 30 days or so,’ Cornyn said when asked when he thinks the reconciliation bill could come up.” [The Hill, [2/6/17](#)]

The chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Lamar Alexander, set a timeline for having a replacement by the summertime and the order will be replace, repeal, repair.

**Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN): “In My View We Need To Cast Most Of Our Votes On [Replace] Before Summertime.”** “‘In my view we need to cast most of our votes on [replace] before summertime,’ said Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), chair of the Health, Education and Labor Committee that will participate in the process. ‘That will probably take two or three steps and then take two or three years to implement it over time.’” [Washington Post, [1/10/17](#)]

**Sen. Lamar Alexander (R-TN): “Repeal, Replace, Repair.”** [Alexander Medium Post, [2/5/17](#)]

But President Trump moved the goalposts even further, telling Bill O’Reilly he hopes to have a replacement sometime next year.

**President Trump: “Maybe It’ll Take Sometime Into Next Year.”** “O’Reilly: Can Americans in 2017 expect a new healthcare plan rolled out by the Trump administration, this year? Trump: In the process, and maybe it’ll take until sometime into next year, but we are certainly gonna be in the process. Very complicated. Obamacare is a disaster. You have to remember, Obamacare doesn’t work. So we are putting in a wonderful plan. It statutorily takes a while to get. We’re gonna be putting it in fairly soon. I think that, yes, I would like to say, by the end of the year, at least the rudiments, but we should have something within the year and the following year.” [Trump Interview with Bill O’Reilly, aired [2/5/17](#)]

All this is to say the Republican strategy is not going as planned, a fact they admit privately if not publicly.

**New York Times: From ‘Repeal’ to ‘Repair’: Campaign Talk on Health Law Meets Reality** [New York Times, [2/6/17](#)]

**Wall Street Journal: Conservative Republicans Double Down on Push to Repeal Health Law** [Wall Street Journal, [2/6/17](#)]

**New York Times: G.O.P. Campaign to Repeal Obamacare Stalls on the Details** [New York Times, [2/2/17](#)]

**Bloomberg: Slow Pace of Obamacare Repeal Leaves House Conservatives Fuming** [Bloomberg, [1/31/17](#)]

**New York Times: In Private, Republican Lawmakers Agonize Over Health Law Repeal** [New York Times, [1/27/17](#)]

**Washington Post: Behind closed doors, Republican lawmakers fret about how to repeal Obamacare** [Washington Post, [1/27/17](#)]

## The Reality: On Health Care, the Details Matter

When it comes to health care, the details matter. The president and congressional Republicans have sent mixed messages over the past weeks and months laying out their strategy to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act about who will be covered, how much it will cost, and how comprehensive the coverage will be, mainly because they cannot agree on the details. Behind closed doors, Rep. Tom McClintock (R-CA) voiced the concern many Republicans have.

**Rep. Tom McClintock (R-CA): “Republicans Will Own [The Health System] Lock, Stock And Barrel.”** “We’d better be sure that we’re prepared to live with the market we’ve created’ with repeal, said Rep. Tom McClintock (R-Calif.). ‘That’s going to be called Trumpcare. Republicans will own that lock, stock and barrel, and we’ll be judged in the election less than two years away.’” [Washington Post, [1/27/17](#)]

Below are a few areas where Republicans have not come to consensus and how the consequences these issues will have on people across America.

### **Coverage**

One concern people have over the debate to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act is whether they will continue to have coverage.

**AP/NORC Poll: 56 Percent “Extremely” Or “Very” Concerned They Will Lose Coverage If Republicans Repeal The ACA.** “A [new poll](#) by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research finds that 56 percent of U.S. adults are ‘extremely’ or ‘very’ concerned that many will lose health insurance if the health overhaul is repealed. That includes more than 8 in 10 Democrats, nearly half of independents, and more than 1 in 5 Republicans. Another 45 percent of Republicans say they’re ‘somewhat’ concerned.” [Associated Press, [1/27/17](#)]

Consumers have every right to be concerned. If Republicans keep heading down the path they are on, repealing the ACA through a legislative maneuver called the budget reconciliation process - which allows the Senate to pass changes with only 51 votes - without having a replacement, as many as 30 million people would lose coverage.

**Urban Institute: 29.8 Million People Would Become Uninsured If Congress Repeals The ACA Through Reconciliation Without A Replacement.** An Urban Institute analysis of the impacts of repealing the ACA through the budget reconciliation process without a replacement plan found: “The number of uninsured people would rise from 28.9 million to 58.7 million in 2019, an increase of 29.8 million people (103 percent). The share of nonelderly people without insurance would increase from 11 percent to 21 percent, a higher rate of uninsurance than before the ACA because of the disruption to the nongroup insurance market.” [Urban Institute, [12/6/16](#)]

**Nonpartisan CBO: Repealing ACA Through Reconciliation Without A Replacement Would Result In 18 Million More Uninsured In The First Year And Increase To 32 Million By 2026.**

“The number of people who are uninsured would increase by 18 million in the first new plan year following enactment of the bill. Later, after the elimination of the ACA’s expansion of Medicaid eligibility and of subsidies for insurance purchased through the ACA marketplaces, that number would increase to 27 million, and then to 32 million in 2026.” [Congressional Budget Office, [1/17/17](#)]

Republicans cannot agree how many people would be covered. President Trump and promised “insurance for everybody,” while others said no one who has coverage now will lose their coverage.

**President Trump: “We’re Going To Have Insurance For Everybody.”** ““We’re going to have insurance for everybody,’ Trump said. ‘There was a philosophy in some circles that if you can’t pay for it, you don’t get it. That’s not going to happen with us.’ People covered under the law ‘can expect to have great health care. It will be in a much simplified form. Much less expensive and much better.’”[Washington Post, [1/15/17](#)]

**GOP Conference Chair Rep. Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA):** “No One Who Has Coverage Because Of Obamacare Today Will Lose That Coverage.” [Morning Consult, [1/10/17](#)]

**Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV): “The Goal Is To Get Everybody Who Has Insurance - And More - Insurance.”** ““The goal is to get everybody who has insurance — and more — insured. So this is still very much in a state of flux and development. But that’s my goal,’ said Republican Senator Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia.” [Bloomberg, [1/5/17](#)]

Others disagree. Typically, Republicans only promise “universal access” to health care rather than coverage for everyone.

**New York Times: G.O.P. Plans to Replace Health Care Law With ‘Universal Access’** [New York Times, [12/15/16](#)]

The distinction is important. Sen. Bernie Sanders put it very succinctly when he told Tom Price, “I have access to buying a \$10 million home. I don’t have the money to do that.” In other words, the so-called replacement plan could provide access to coverage, but that does not mean it would be quality coverage with the consumer protections under the ACA such as banning lifetime limits and prohibiting insurers from denying coverage because of a pre-existing condition. As the Center on Budget notes, it could mean a return to the pre-ACA world, where insurers offered cheaper options that provided little to no coverage; or where insurers found loopholes to deny coverage.

**CBPP: “Universal Access...Could Mean A Return To The Pre-ACA World.”** “It’s unclear what ‘universal access’ means, but it could mean a return to the pre-ACA world. Back then, most people could buy a health plan of some kind, but insurmountable barriers to coverage left 50 million people uninsured. The individual market offered often bare-bones plans that were still unaffordable to many low- and moderate-income people, and some people were denied coverage due to pre-existing conditions. Some plans had severe limits on the services and dollar amounts covered, had no limits on out-of-pocket costs a family might have to pay, and didn’t include vital benefits like prescription drugs or maternity care. ‘Universal access’ might merely mean the availability of a state

[high-risk pool](#), which wouldn't cover people with pre-existing health conditions. Either way, 'universal access' apparently offers no coverage guarantee for low-income people who couldn't afford adequate coverage before the ACA." [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [12/16/16](#)]

## **Medicaid**

Another area Republicans cannot seem to agree on is Medicaid. Millions across America now have coverage since the Affordable Care Act expanded the program at little to no cost to states. Some conservative governors and senators from states that expanded Medicaid have warned Congress the consequences of repealing the ACA without having a replacement plan ready to go.

**Governor John Kasich (R-OH): "Let's Just Say They Got Rid Of It, Didn't Replace It With Anything. What Happens To The 700,000 People?"** "We are now able to provide health insurance to 700,000 people," said Kasich, who circumvented his state Legislature to enact expansion in 2013 and who was the sole GOP presidential candidate in 2016 to defend that portion of Obamacare. 'Let's just say they just got rid of it, didn't replace it with anything,' he said. "What happens to the 700,000 people? What happens to drug treatment? What happens to mental health counseling? What happens to these people who have very high cholesterol and are victims from a heart attack? What happens to them?" [Politico, [1/13/17](#)]

**Governor Brian Sandoval (R-NV): "We Must Ensure That Any New Reforms Do Not ... Leverage The Advancements Already Made And Paid For."** "Going forward, we must ensure first that any new reforms do not mandate additional costs, and second, leverage the advancements already made and paid for under the ACA. Moreover, you must ensure that individuals, families, children, aged, blind, disabled, and mentally ill are not suddenly left without the care they need to live healthy, productive lives." [Sandoval Letter to House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, [1/5/17](#)]

**Sen. Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-TX): "Nobody's Going To Lose Coverage" Under Medicaid.** "One of the top concerns is what will happen to individuals who became eligible for Medicaid with its expansion under Obamacare. The Senate's No. 2 Republican, however, promised that no one who got coverage under Medicaid expansion will lose it. ... Reporters followed up. 'You're saying nobody's going to lose coverage?' one asked. 'Nobody's going to lose coverage,' Cornyn said. 'Obviously, people covered today will continue to be covered. And, the hope is we'll expand access.'" [Talking Points Memo, [1/19/17](#)]

**Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) Spoke Favorably Of Coverage Extended To Low-Income Households, Saying "It's Absolutely A Key Part Of This Discussion."** "Murkowski said the ACA's subsidized insurance is important to a small but significant number of Alaskans, and she spoke favorably of the coverage extended to low-income households, although she did not directly say whether she's committed to keeping the law's federal support for expanded Medicaid. 'It is absolutely a key part of this discussion, especially as it relates to states like Alaska that have moved forward with Medicaid expansion,' Murkowski said." [Alaska Public Radio, [1/10/17](#)]

**Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV): "What Are We Going To Do About Those That Are Part Of The Medicaid Expansion And How That's Going To Impact Them."** "I want to go to Medicaid expansion for just a minute. Nevada was one of the 36 states that chose to expand eligibility for Medicaid. We went from, I think, the enrollment went from 350,000 to over 600,000. And, I guess, the concern and I think it's part of the letter that I gave to the Chairman as whether or not that will

have an impact, and what we're going to do to see that those individuals are impacted. I -- probably the biggest question that we have for you today is what are we going to do about those that are part of the Medicaid expansion and how that's going to impact them." [Heller at Tom Price Senate Finance Committee Hearing, [1/24/17](#)]

**Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH): "The Idea Is To Not End The Expansion..."** "Last time, it was a two-year transition period, so people who are currently covered by Medicaid because of the Affordable Care would know that the rug is not going to be pulled out from under them,' Sen. Rob Portman (R-OH) told TPM this week. 'John Kasich, our Republican governor, who was for having expanded Medicaid, liked that because it gives him a chance to weigh in on the kind of Medicaid that he would like to see, which would be to give the state much more flexibility.' Portman added that 'the idea is to not end the expansion, but to give the states the tools to be able to cover more people more effectively.'" [Talking Points Memo, [12/2/16](#)]

**Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV): "I'm From A State That Has An Expanded Medicaid Population That I Am Very Concerned About...I Don't Want To Throw Them Off Into The Cold."** "I'm from a state that has an expanded Medicaid population that I am very concerned about,' said Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) this week. 'I don't want to throw them off into the cold, and I don't think that's a strategy that I want to see. It's too many people. That's over 200,000 people in my state. So we need a transition. I think we'll repeal and then we'll work during the transition period for the replacement vehicle.'" [Talking Points Memo, [12/2/16](#)]

Republicans should be concerned. Not only does Medicaid provide coverage for millions of people, repealing Medicaid expansion will adversely impact hospitals, particularly rural hospitals, hurt local economies and cost jobs.

**11 Million People Could Lose Coverage If Medicaid Expansion Is Repealed.** "Repealing the Medicaid expansion would eliminate health coverage for up to, and quite possibly more than, 11 million low-income Americans in the 31 states (plus the District of Columbia) that have taken up this option." [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [12/22/16](#)]

**Commonwealth Fund: Repealing Medicaid Expansion Would Cost 1.5 Million Jobs.**

"[C]anceling states' Medicaid expansions lowers federal funding by \$466 billion from 2019 to 2023. This leads to 1.5 million fewer people with jobs in 2019. Moreover, gross state products shrink by nearly \$900 billion and state and local tax revenues drop by \$29 billion. The majority of these losses occur in the states that have expanded Medicaid (31, plus the District of Columbia), with nearly 1.2 million jobs lost in 2019. However, the 19 states that have not expanded Medicaid also experience major setbacks: collectively, they lose about 338,000 jobs in 2019, even though they do not receive the direct federal matching funds for Medicaid expansion." [Commonwealth Fund, [January 2017](#)]

**American Hospital Association President Richard J. Pollack and Federation of American Hospitals President Charles N. Kahn: Repealing The ACA Without A Replacement Will "Weaken Local Economies That Hospitals Help Sustain AND Grow, And Result In Massive Job Losses.** "Losses of this magnitude cannot be sustained and will adversely impact patients' access to care, decimate hospitals' and health systems' ability to provide services, weaken local economies that hospitals help sustain and grow, and result in massive job losses. As you know, hospitals are often the largest employer in many communities, and more than half of a hospital's

budget is devoted to supporting the salaries and benefits of caregivers who provide 24/7 coverage, which cannot be replaced.” [Kahn Letter to Congress, [12/6/16](#)]

**The ACA’s Medicaid Expansion Provided Some Stability To Rural Hospitals.** “Nationally, the Medicaid expansion under Obamacare offered a bit of stability for some rural hospitals at risk. Researchers say it disproportionately benefited such facilities, particularly in Pennsylvania and other states with large rural populations, such as Illinois, Kentucky and Michigan. In Pennsylvania, 625,000 people enrolled in the expanded Medicaid program; close to 300,000 came from rural areas, says Andy Carter, president of the Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania.” [Kaiser Health News, [1/4/17](#)]

**Repealing The Medicaid Expansion Would Likely Accelerate Rural Hospital Closures.** “State decisions around the Medicaid expansion have had an especially large impact on rural hospitals. For example, rural hospitals in expansion states have had larger gains in Medicaid revenue than urban hospitals. Rural hospitals also are more likely to turn a profit if they are located in an expansion state, research shows. Most of the 80 rural hospitals that have closed since 2010 are in southern states that have not expanded Medicaid. Repealing the expansion would likely accelerate rural hospital closures.” [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [12/22/16](#)]

### **Paying for a Replacement Plan**

In addition to finding consensus on a replacement plan, Republicans need to agree on how to pay for it. Those details, again, matter.

Some conservative members said the ACA needs to be repealed immediately, including all the tax provisions.

**Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH): “Repeal It, Get Rid Of It, Every Single Bit Of It, Don’t Keep Any Of It.”** “‘Repeal it, get rid of it, every single bit of it, don’t keep any of it,’ Representative Jim Jordan of Ohio said during an interview this week on Bloomberg TV.” [Bloomberg, [1/6/17](#)]

The problem with this approach, however, is once these revenue raising streams are repealed, it will be harder for conservatives to vote for new ones to pay for whatever they come up with to replace the Affordable Care Act. It is one of the reasons why more Republicans agree they cannot repeal the Affordable Care Act until there is a replacement.

**Senate Republicans Are Growing Concerned About Scrapping Revenues From The ACA Prematurely.** “At least four GOP senators have expressed concerns about a repeal bill that delays a replacement, and others are concerned that the repeal bill may scrap the tax hikes prematurely. Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, who is working with Senator Susan Collins of Maine and Representative Pete Sessions of Texas on a replacement, said the Obamacare taxes shouldn’t be repealed up front -- and instead should be replaced as part of a tax overhaul later this year in a separate reconciliation package that would pair fewer tax breaks with lower rates. ‘If we don’t like ‘em, we can replace them. But we can do it in a way where you overall are lowering tax rates and making the tax code more efficient. There will be enough there for people to win,’ he said.” [Bloomberg, [1/6/17](#)]

There is reason for concern. As the Brookings Institution outlined, repealing the law’s revenues without having a replacement plan would both exhaust Medicare’s trust fund and leave a fraction of the revenues for

a replacement plan. Moreover, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities makes clear repealing these revenue raisers would disproportionately benefit the wealthy while cutting care for millions of low- and middle-income families. In other words, repealing these revenues would adversely impact care for working- and middle-class families while benefiting the wealthy's pocketbook.

**Brookings Institution: Repealing The ACA Through Reconciliation Would Accelerate The Depletion Of The Medicare Part A Trust Fund.** “Specifically, the reconciliation repeal bill from earlier this year eliminated \$680 billion (over ten years) of taxes on high-income households and the health care industry (e.g., insurers, device manufactures, and drug companies). In addition to increasing deficits, by rescinding the 0.9% Hospital Insurance Trust Fund payroll tax on wages above \$200,000, these tax cuts would also accelerate the exhaustion of Medicare's Part A Trust Fund by four years, from 2028 to 2024.” [Brookings Institution, [12/19/16](#)]

**Brookings Institution: Repealing The ACA Through Reconciliation Would Leave 40 Percent Of Revenues To Pay For A Replacement Plan.** “But while savings on the spending side can likely be banked, the revenue lost from the ACA's tax increases would no longer be available to finance a plan to replace the lost coverage expansions. Consequently, only about 40 percent of the [\\$1.24 trillion cost](#) of the ACA's coverage expansion from 2019-2026 would be available.” [Brookings Institution, [12/19/16](#)]

**Repealing ACA Taxes And Tax Credits Would Give The Top 400 Highest-Income Earners A \$7 Million Tax Cut While Raising Taxes On 7 Million Low- And Moderate-Income Families.** “First, it would eliminate two Medicare taxes — the additional Hospital Insurance tax and the Medicare tax on unearned income — that both fall only on high-income filers, thereby cutting taxes substantially for those at the top. The top 400 highest-income taxpayers — whose annual incomes average more than \$300 million apiece — each would receive an average annual tax cut of about \$7 million, we estimate from Internal Revenue Service (IRS) data...Second, ACA repeal would significantly raise taxes on about 7 million low- and moderate-income families due to the loss of their premium tax credits — worth an average of \$4,800 in 2017 — that help them buy health coverage through the health insurance marketplaces and afford to go to the doctor when needed.” [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [1/12/17](#)]

### **Planned Parenthood**

For years, Republicans in Congress have tried to defund Planned Parenthood, even going as far as threatening to shut down the government in 2011. Now that Republicans control the White House and have majorities in the House and Senate, they see another opportunity to cut federal funding to one of the nation's largest health providers.

**Speaker Ryan Said Congress Will Seek To Defund Planned Parenthood In Their ACA Repeal Efforts.** “House Speaker Paul Ryan announced Thursday that Republicans will move to strip all federal funding for Planned Parenthood as part of the process they are using early this year to dismantle Obamacare. Congressional Republicans have tried for years to zero out all federal funding for Planned Parenthood because the group provides abortion services. The fight over Obamacare helped trigger a 16-day government shutdown in 2013, and Democrats and President Barack Obama insisted any Planned Parenthood provision targeting the group be removed from a bill to fund federal agencies.” [CNN, [1/6/17](#)]

But not everyone in the Republican field is on board. Sens. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) have expressed their skepticism. And Rep. John Faso (R-NY) warned at the GOP retreat in Philadelphia that Republicans were walking into a “giant political trap.”

**Rep. John Faso (R-NY): “We Are Just Walking Into A Giant Political Trap.”** “Rep. John Faso (R-N.Y.), a freshman congressman from the Hudson Valley, warned strongly against using the repeal of the ACA to also defund Planned Parenthood. ‘We are just walking into a gigantic political trap if we go down this path of sticking Planned Parenthood in the health insurance bill,’ he said. ‘If you want to do it somewhere else, I have no problem, but I think we are creating a political minefield for ourselves — House and Senate.’” [Washington Post, [1/27/17](#)]

**Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) On Voting Against Repeal If Defunding Planned Parenthood Was Included: “That Is Certainly Something I Would Have To Take Into Consideration.”** “Collins and Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) say they would consider opposing any bill that cuts funding for the group. But they declined to commit to voting against the ACA repeal, saying it has not been written. ‘That is certainly something I would have to take into consideration,’ Murkowski said, referring to voting against the entire repeal bill to protect Planned Parenthood.” [Washington Post, [1/18/17](#)]

**Sen. Collins (R-ME): “I’m Not Happy To Hear The Speaker Wants To Include Defunding Planned Parenthood.”** “That measure would likely pass in the House, but two pro-abortion rights GOP senators, Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, won’t commit to approving the bill with the Planned Parenthood provision in it. ‘I’m going to wait and see what happens,’ Collins told reporters on Thursday, indicating she thinks it’s too early to decide how she will vote on the bill. ‘Obviously, I’m not happy to hear the speaker wants to include defunding of Planned Parenthood, an extremely controversial issue in the package.’” [CNN, [1/6/17](#)]

Faso is right to be concerned. People across America not only support Planned Parenthood, but many rely on it for quality health care.

**PPAF: Sixteen Nationwide Polls And Nine State Polls Show Strong Favorability For Planned Parenthood; Millions Each Year Rely On Its Services.** “Sixteen separate nationwide polls and an additional nine polls in key states show strong favorability for Planned Parenthood and strong opposition to efforts in Congress to block patients from accessing high-quality, lifesaving care at Planned Parenthood. These poll results stem from the deep and longstanding relationship that many Americans have with Planned Parenthood, the nation’s leading provider of reproductive health care and sex education. For a century, people have relied on Planned Parenthood for care and information, and each year Planned Parenthood health centers serve millions of patients essential services, such as birth control, lifesaving cancer screenings, safe and legal abortion, and other high-quality health care. An estimated one in five American women has relied on Planned Parenthood for care in her lifetime.” [Planned Parenthood Action Fund, [1/5/17](#)]

## Conclusion

Developing health care policy that provides quality, affordable coverage for everyone is harder than it looks. The hopes of a quick repeal has met the reality of repeal, a failure to come to consensus on a replacement

plan. Their current state of disarray and confusion will only worsen as Republicans move down this wrong path. As it turns out, people across the country overwhelmingly oppose efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act without knowing what the Republican replacement plan is. The Republican strategy of repeal now, replace...whenever has real world consequences – 30 million could have their coverage ripped away. With a life and death issue as serious as health care, people deserve to know the details of how they would replace the Affordable Care Act.