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Congressional Budget Office: 23 Million to Lose Health Care, Increased Premiums from Republican Health Care Repeal

“The health and financial security of hundreds of thousands of West Virginians is on the line.”

CHARLESTON, WV - Protect Our Care Campaign Director Leslie Dach released the following statement on the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) report today on the health care repeal bill and its impacts on West Virginians:

“The Congressional Budget Office confirmed yet again any health care repeal cuts coverage for millions, increases health costs for everyday people, and eliminates protections millions rely on – all to give massive tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans and insurance and drug companies.

“People across the country have rejected Republican repeal and pleaded with the Republican Party to stop their partisan rush. Yet, the Senate is heading down the same repeal path the House did, working secretly behind closed doors, refusing to hold hearings and using the House repeal as a starting point. The real test for the Senate is not whether a bill is better than the disastrous House bill, but whether it increases coverage, lowers costs and keeps the protections in the current law. It's time for the Senate to abandon partisan repeal of the ACA and instead

work across the aisle to keep what works and fix what doesn't -- not tear our health care apart. The lives and financial security of millions of Americans are on the line."

"The numbers released today show that Representatives Jenkins, Mooney and McKinley care nothing for West Virginians," said Renate Pore, Director of Health Policy for West Virginians for Affordable Health Care. "All three voted for this bill that will cause thousands of West Virginians to lose health coverage, close rural hospitals and cost us thousands of jobs."

Mina Schultz of Fairmont was allowed to be covered under her parents' plan when she was diagnosed with cancer and now receives ongoing screenings and follow up. "Simply put, this bill cannot pass. This report shows that the AHCA will absolutely devastate West Virginia and personally my costs are going to go way up. I'm barely making it as it is. As someone with a pretty substantial pre-existing condition, I'm terrified of this bill. I want to take care of my health and my own costs. I'm doing that now. I won't be able to do that under AHCA," said Schultz.

The bill would have severe impacts for West Virginians:

- The bill would **strip health care from [124,500 West Virginians](#)**.
- The Republican bill puts more than **[737,900 West Virginians](#) with pre-existing conditions at risk of losing coverage, including [90,600 children](#)**.
- The [American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, and others](#) say it means "**people with pre-existing conditions could be denied coverage or forced to choose between purchasing basic necessities and affording their health care coverage.**" A new [report](#) shows how much more people with pre-existing conditions would be charged: **\$4,270 for asthma, \$17,060 for pregnancy, \$26,180 for rheumatoid arthritis and \$140,510 for metastatic**

cancer.

- **AARP** opposes it because it **raises premiums five times more on people over 50** - what they call an ‘age tax,’ increasing the average cost per enrollee by \$13,083 by 2020 **for Americans over 55**. These estimates would jump to \$19,109 by 2026.
- The Republican bill **disproportionately hurts Americans living in rural areas**, in some cases **causing a person’s plan to exceed their annual income**.
- As the opioid crisis is sweeping the nation, it would also cause **204,819 West Virginians suffering from mental illness or substance use disorder to lose access to critical mental health services made available through Medicaid expansion.**
- It includes a **giveaway to insurance companies**: if your insurance lapses for more than 63 days, **insurance companies will charge you 30 percent more when you sign up for insurance again.**

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