



POLICY & ACTION FROM CONSUMER REPORTS

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 15, 2017

Dear Representative,

In a letter sent to Congress on February 15, 2017, Consumers Union, the policy and mobilization arm of the non-profit Consumer Reports, outlined evidence-based, consumer-centric principles that any suitable replacement for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) must contain. I write to inform you that we analyzed the American Health Care Act (AHCA) and have assigned it a failing grade.

As a non-partisan, independent organization that has advocated for the best consumer products and policies for more than 80 years, we determined that the AHCA fails to meet the needs of consumers regarding these crucial principles:

- Ensuring broad enrollment in coverage;
- Providing meaningful access to healthcare;
- Making coverage and healthcare marketplaces easy to navigate;
- Addressing underlying reasons for high costs;
- Establishing a national standard that sets basic consumer protections.

Consumers Union has a long history of working for a fairer and more just marketplace for consumers. We believe all consumers deserve healthcare and coverage that is accessible, affordable, understandable, fairly priced, and meets high, uniform standards for quality and safety. This bill takes us in the opposite direction: it would result in a system with higher costs for dramatically less care, inflict harm on consumers who are depending on a fair and adequate health system, and needlessly expose consumers to risks with respect to their health and financial well-being.

For these reasons, Consumers Union strongly opposes the AHCA. As proposed, the bill would lead to tens of millions of consumers losing their insurance coverage (with poorer health outcomes and more premature deaths as a result), higher premiums, higher deductibles and out-of-pocket costs for many others, devastating cuts to Medicaid, and incentives for healthy people to stay out of the insurance market altogether. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) projects that the bill would cause 14 million consumers to lose coverage by 2018, a number that increases to 24 million in 2026 due to additional Medicaid cuts, and results in an estimated 52 million uninsured people by 2026. This is not the future that Americans deserve and is, simply, unacceptable.

ConsumersUnion®

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We urge Congress to oppose the AHCA because it would result in millions of consumers losing health insurance, higher healthcare costs, and devastating cuts to Medicaid.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laura MacCleery". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail that curves upwards and to the right.

Laura MacCleery
Vice President
Consumer Policy and Mobilization
Consumer Reports