March 2, 2017

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| The Honorable Paul Ryan  Speaker  U.S. House of Representatives  Washington, DC 20515 | The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  Minority Leader  U.S. House of Representatives  Washington, DC 20515 |
| The Honorable Kevin Brady  Chairman  House Ways and Means  Washington, DC 20515 | The Honorable Greg Walden  Chairman  House Energy and Commerce  Washington, DC 20515 |
| The Honorable Richard Neal  Ranking Minority Member  House Ways and Means  Washington, DC 20515 | The Honorable Frank Pallone  Ranking Minority Member  House Energy and Commerce  Washington, DC 20515 |

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Neal, Chairman Walden, and Ranking Member Pallone:

On behalf of Consumers Union, the policy and mobilization arm of the non-profit Consumer Reports, I write to express deep concern and alarm regarding the procedure through which the House Ways and Means and Energy and Commerce Committees are moving forward with a mark up of a replacement bill for the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

We urge the Committees to move forward in a transparent manner. We are alarmed that the Committees are considering a mark up of a bill that would repeal the ACA and dramatically restructure Medicaid without having a score from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office to show what the budgetary and coverage impacts would be, and that members will not have a copy of the bill to read until 36 hours prior. This does not allow a reasonable amount of time for all members to carefully review the new legislation, or for input from stakeholder groups, and does nothing to ease the concerns of consumers who deserve to know the details of what might happen to their healthcare coverage and its cost implications. Instead, we urge the Committees to hold public hearings and to solicit input from diverse stakeholders and experts. This legislation affects tens of millions of consumers and one-fifth of our economy and should be debated in full public view.

We are already seeing the perilous and destabilizing effects of a lack of certainty in the insurance marketplace. Repealing the Affordable Care Act without a suitable, simultaneous replacement that, at minimum, maintains coverage for the number of people currently covered and provides comparable consumer protections would be irresponsible and affect many American families. Further, a piecemeal approach to replacement, or a repeal and delayed replacement approach, is inappropriate as it would result in millions of Americans losing vital health coverage and further destabilize insurance markets.

We have no way to judge if what is being considered by Committee leadership is a comprehensive plan that will maintain current coverage levels and provide the same, strong consumer protections to all Americans, or if it will result in the catastrophic loss of coverage for millions. Consumers have no way to know this either.

Healthcare touches the life of every American. This is too important an issue to proceed in a secretive manner. We strongly urge the Committee to be transparent, to hold hearings before marking up any health reform legislation, and to have the nonpartisan CBO score that shows its budgetary impact before proceeding.

Sincerely,



Laura MacCleery

Vice President

Consumer Policy and Mobilization

Consumer Reports