



March 20, 2016

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On December 28, 2016, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) wrote to you to outline our priorities and share the criteria by which we would evaluate any health care reform proposals that would be considered in during the 115th Congress. Like you, we recognize that our health care system is not perfect and there are areas of reform that need to be pursued. We were hopeful that the House of Representatives would focus its energy and resources on improving our current health care system. We were equally hopeful that pledges of “patient-centered” reforms would prevail.

Following the introduction of the American Health Care Act” the AAFP provided thoughtful comments and recommendations to the Ways & Means, Energy & Commerce, and House Budget Committees. We provided these comments and recommendations in an effort to inform and shape the final legislative product that would ultimately be considered by the House. Each of these letters raised concerns, but they also offered truly patient-centered reforms that would improve our nation’s health care system.

There are several provisions in the AHCA that are consistent with AAFP policy. We strongly support the continuation of protections available under current law that prohibit discrimination in insurance underwriting based on age, gender, race, or an individual’s health history. We also appreciate that the proposal takes steps to ensure that individuals with pre-existing conditions are not subjected to draconian medical underwriting practices that would make coverage unobtainable for them. We also appreciate that you acknowledge the poor payment rates that are prevalent in Medicaid, especially for primary care, and offer a policy solution that would allow states to address this long-standing problem, even if just temporarily.

Despite the inclusion of provisions that extend these important policies that are available under current law, the AAFP has significant concerns with the AHCA and is deeply troubled by the negative impact it would have on individuals, families, and our health care system writ large.

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It is well-recognized that the two most influential indicators of health are continuous health care coverage and a usual source of care, typically through a continuous relationship with a primary care physician. Unfortunately, the AHCA fails both measures. After careful evaluation of the proposed legislation and consideration of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) analysis, it is clear that this legislation will result in millions of people losing their health care coverage. Furthermore, those who retain coverage will face escalating premiums and deductibles that will further separate them and their health care needs from the health care system.

For these reasons, **the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) must oppose the “American Health Care Act” and we will be encouraging all Members of the House of Representatives to vote no.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wanda D. Filer, MD". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in Filer.

Wanda D. Filer, MD, MBA, FAAFP
Board Chair

C: The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
The Honorable Steny Hoyer
The Honorable Steve Scalise