



For Immediate Release
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California Academy of Family Physicians Statement Against American Health Care Act

Family physicians oppose House of Representatives passage of bill to overturn Affordable Care Act and jeopardize health care coverage for millions

San Francisco – Michelle Quiogue, MD, president of the 9,700-member California Academy of Family Physicians (CAFP), has issued the following statement:

“We are deeply discouraged by those in the House of Representatives who voted to advance a bill that would eliminate insurance protections and affordable coverage for millions of patients. We call on the Senate to refuse passage of the American Health Care Act (AHCA).”

“The ACHA (H.R. 1628) remains a highly flawed proposal that will destabilize our health care system, cause significant loss of coverage, and permit discrimination against patients based on their gender, age and health status. CAFP stands with the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) in continued opposition to the AHCA. On behalf of our millions of patients in California, we oppose the House passage of this bill.

“No one should be fooled by recent amendments claiming to improve this bill, which eliminates several gains made under the Affordable Care Act that took effect in 2014. The AHCA would jeopardize affordable coverage – and therefore the health care – of millions of Californians who gained coverage under the ACA. Gains made thanks to the ACA through Covered California and other access to private health plans, employer-offered plans and the expanded Medi-Cal (Medicaid) program have improved access to care for Californians. We call on Congress to continue – not reverse – these gains.

“The AHCA would:

- Destabilize the individual health insurance market.
- Create a race to the bottom by eliminating any standards for minimum insurance benefits.
- Enact draconian cuts in the Medicaid (Medi-Cal) program that would have an immediate negative impact on low-income individuals, children and millions of senior citizens who rely on the program.
- Eliminate community rating and return to medical underwriting, allowing insurers to discriminate against individuals based on their gender, age and health status.

- Deny individuals protection against annual and lifetime spending caps, threatening the financial stability of the most vulnerable patients and their families.

“It is unconscionable that Congress would eliminate coverage and cost protections for the millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions.

“In recent days, we’ve seen an effort to advance policies that claim to protect individuals with pre-existing conditions. The minor increase in funding for high-risk pools that was recently included in the bill comes nowhere close to the estimated cost of forcing vulnerable patients into these inherently flawed and expensive risk pools. The bill provides inadequate funding for an inadequate period of time, creating an under-funded and temporary solution for millions of patients.

“By removing critical consumer protections that collectively ensured individuals with pre-existing conditions could purchase affordable health care coverage, the AHCA will result in higher premiums and higher deductibles for patients.

“The negative impact of the AHCA is not limited to the individual insurance market. These policies also may affect the more than 130 million people with employer-sponsored insurance.

“We strongly protest this move to eliminate affordable coverage for millions of patients, and call on the Senate to refuse passage of the AHCA.”

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About the California Academy of Family Physicians: *With more than 9,700 members, including active practicing family physicians, residents in family medicine, and medical students interested in the specialty, CAFP is the largest primary care medical society in California. Family physicians are trained to treat an entire family’s medical needs, addressing the whole spectrum of life’s medical challenges. FPs serve a broad base of patients in urban, suburban and rural areas, often in California’s most underserved areas.*