



Oncology Nursing Society

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ONS Statement on H.R. 1628, the American Health Care Act of 2017

Federal Healthcare Legislation Must be Accessible to All Americans

March 17, 2017 (Pittsburgh, PA): The American Health Care Act of 2017 (AHCA) in the US House of Representatives is intended to repeal and replace the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA), commonly referred to as Obamacare.

The Oncology Nursing Society (ONS) urges Congress to oppose the AHCA in its current form. Any federal health care law should include:

- The provision of comprehensive healthcare coverage with respect to cancer prevention, cancer risk assessment, risk reduction services, genetic counseling, genetic predisposition testing, early detection, and screening procedures is available to everyone through continuous health insurance coverage, irrespective of personal or family health history or preexisting conditions.
- The provision of accessible and affordable health care coverage includes consumer and patient engagement in decision making regarding availability, cost, and efficacy of treatment options and supportive care.
- Evidence-based conventional and integrative therapies, comprehensive symptom management, palliative care, psychosocial care, and survivorship are options for every patient with cancer.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has reviewed the AHCA and predicts that

- The increase in the number of uninsured people relative to the number under current law would rise to 21 million in 2020 and then to 24 million in 2026.
- The reductions in insurance coverage between 2018 and 2026 would stem in large part from changes in Medicaid enrollment
- In 2026, an estimated 52 million people would be uninsured, compared with 28 million who would lack insurance that year under current law.

Too much is at stake to play politics with America's public health. From mammography and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) tests to drug development and clinical trials, Americans have come to expect a healthcare system that puts patients first and creates access to a variety of providers across the country. Anything less is unacceptable.

Since 1975, ONS a professional community of more than 39,000 oncology nurses, has developed evidence-based education programs and treatment information, and advocated for patient care, all in an effort to improve quality of life and outcomes for patients with cancer and their families. Together, ONS and the cancer community seek to reduce the risks, incidence, and burden of cancer by encouraging healthy lifestyles, promoting early detection, and improving the management of cancer symptoms and side effects throughout the disease trajectory. For more information about the Oncology Nursing Society, visit www.ons.org

Action Alert

Tell Congress to vote against H.R. 1628, the American Health Care Act of 2017

Background: The American Health Care Act of 2017 (H.R. 1628), referred to by the acronym AHCA is intended to be a replacement for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, commonly referred to as Obamacare, enacted in 2010. The bill is a combination of legislative recommendations that were passed by the House Energy and Commerce Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee on March 9, 2017. It passed the Budget Committee on March 16, 2017 and the Rules Committee will incorporate additional changes on March 22, 2017. The bill will be on the House floor this Thursday.

Issue: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) analyzed the AHCA and found that the number of uninsured people relative to the number under current law would rise to 21 million in 2020 and then to 24 million in 2026. The reductions in insurance coverage



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between 2018 and 2026 would stem in large part from changes in Medicaid enrollment. In 2026, an estimated 52 million people would be uninsured.

Take Action:

Dear Representative:

As an oncology nurse, I am concerned about the future of health care in the United States. I urge you to oppose H.R. 1628, the American Health Care Act of 2017.

Congress is debating this bill and patients are at great risk of losing essential coverage to the necessary treatments and cures for cancer. Elements of the bill will put up barriers for patients by repealing the Medicaid expansion and denying access to vital prevention services.

The potential to deny tens of millions of American healthcare is too great. We must provide access for all people and help create a better system for the provision of care. I welcome the opportunity to be a resource to you and would like to discuss the role of the nurse in the provision of care with your office.

Please vote against the American Health Care Act and help sustain access to health care for all Americans.

Sincerely,