



## Text File

**Introduced:** 5/9/2017

**Bill No:** 2017-1515, **Version:** 1

**Committee:** City Council

**Status:** Adopted

**WHEREAS**, on Thursday, May 4, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the American Health Care Act (AHCA) by a 217-213 vote. The AHCA stands to strip millions of Americans of health insurance coverage and claw back key tenets of the Affordable Care Act (ACA); and

**WHEREAS**, the ACHA would allow states to obtain waivers from the ACA's requirement that insurers cover essential health benefits, such as ambulatory patient services, emergency services, hospitalization, maternity and newborn care, mental health care, substance use services, behavioral health treatment, prescription drug treatment, rehabilitative and habilitative services and related devices, laboratory services, preventative wellness services, chronic disease management, and pediatric services, including vision care and oral care; and

**WHEREAS**, the ACHA would also permit states to opt-out of the ACA's community rating regulation, which mandated that individuals be charged the same price for health insurance irrespective of their health history or current health status, meaning that individuals with pre-existing conditions could be subjected to higher insurance costs; and

**WHEREAS**, the ACA's Medicaid expansion that allowed 32 states, including Pennsylvania, to grant broader access to benefits for some of those states' most at-risk residents by granting coverage to adults making up to 133 percent of the federal poverty line would be phased out after 2019 under the AHCA, and newly eligible residents would be barred from entering the program; and

**WHEREAS**, the AHCA would further change Medicaid by converting it to a per-capita cap system that allocates funding from the federal government to state governments for each enrollee, or allocate funding in the form of a block grant, where funding levels aren't tied to the number of enrollees. A change from the current Medicaid system, in which the government commits to paying for a Medicaid enrollee's treatment, to the per-capita cap system would be the equivalent of an \$880 billion cut to the program. A change to a block grant formula would amount to an even more drastic cut; and

**WHEREAS**, the AHCA would end the ACA's individual mandate regulation and force anyone with a 63-day gap in coverage to pay a premium surcharge to their insurer, wherein an insurer can charge as much as 30 percent more for a full year before premiums return to standard price; and

**WHEREAS**, individuals purchasing health care through HealthCare.gov or other marketplaces will likely see out-of-pocket expenses increase by an average of \$3,600 by 2020 if the AHCA passes; and

**WHEREAS**, according to a March estimate by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) of an earlier iteration of the AHCA, 24 million fewer Americans would have health insurance by 2026 should that version of the bill have passed. The version of the AHCA that passed the House of Representatives didn't receive a CBO scoring,

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but the austere cuts to programmatic and regulatory framework mean that more than the estimated 24 million could potentially lose coverage under this bill; and

***WHEREAS***, the AHCA, if passed by the Senate and signed into law by President Trump, would rob millions of Americans of affordable health insurance, require people to pay thousands of dollars more each year for health insurance, allow employers and insurers to set lifetime limits on coverage for health services, gut Medicaid, roll back requirements for mental health treatment and maternity care, and eliminate protections for the disabled, sick, elderly, and children.

***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED***, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh hereby expresses its adamant opposition to the American Health Care Act due to the catastrophic effects it stands to have; and

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED***, that the Council of the City of Pittsburgh calls on Pennsylvania's U.S. Senators Bob Casey and Pat Toomey to oppose the American Health Care Act in the Senate.