



## **Repeal and Respect**

### ***Key Principles for Renewing American Healthcare***

The failure of Obamacare presents an opportunity for President Trump to move quickly away from Washington, D.C.-centered “solutions” to healthcare. *The starting point of any healthcare policy must be this: D.C.’s ideas don’t work.*

Despite this, the Congress is spinning its wheels trying to “replace” Obamacare with another doomed-to-fail federal mandate. Instead, its focus should be on giving the American people what they’ve been promised — and what they deserve:

**1) Repeal Obamacare Fully:** *Congress should honor its repeated promise and fully repeal every single word of the Obamacare statute.*

**2) Respect the People and the States:** *Congress should respect the people by allowing them to take charge of their own healthcare, regardless of employment status. Congress should respect the States to manage Medicaid and other safety-net programs.*

The American people deserve and demand a fresh start to healthcare policy.

***“Repeal and Respect” is the way.***

#### **Principle 1: Obamacare Has Failed and Must be Fully Repealed (100%)**

Repealing Obamacare—every single word—is the least Congress can do to reform health care in America, given that Members of Congress have spent four straight election cycles calling for exactly that. The law is a failure on every level: it has raised premiums, led to millions of Americans receiving cancellation notices, raised taxes on the middle class, and further centralized control of the health care system in Washington, D.C.

*Obamacare has made healthcare worse and harder to get. It has to go — all of it.*

Congress has the power to repeal it but blames Senate process and procedure for its failure to do so. That excuse doesn’t withstand scrutiny: it only takes a majority of Congress to take action, and that action may be taken *today*.

#### **Principle 2: Health Care Costs Will Be Reduced If Government Stops Making Decisions for Us**

Repealing Obamacare is a necessary, but not sufficient, step toward bringing the American people true health care reform. By overwhelming margins, the American people care most



about reducing health care costs. In fact, by a 13-point margin, American voters prefer a law that would lower costs, but not guarantee coverage for every American, to a law that would guarantee coverage for every American but raise health care costs.

In 2008, Barack Obama campaigned on a platform that he claimed would reduce health care costs by \$2,500 for the average American family. Once taking office, he instead rammed through a massive health care bill that has resulted in spiraling premiums for millions.

Current proposals being discussed in Congress would utilize the same failed Obamacare mechanisms: government subsidies – in the form of tax “credits” and funded by tax increases – to make insurance (though not healthcare itself) more “affordable.” But more taxing, spending, and regulation doesn’t solve the underlying problem of rising costs. In fact, it makes the problem worse by inflating the very prices that Americans want to see come down.

Congress should remain singularly focused on reducing health costs by the only real means for doing so: more liberty and more respect for Americans’ choices. Specifically, Congress should do the following:

- Change the tax treatment of health insurance (without raising taxes) as a good place to start, equalizing it for employer and individual insurance purchasing.
- Lift the burdensome health insurance mandates driving up costs.
- Give states—the “laboratories of democracy”—appropriate leeway for them to take action, increase competition, and lower health care costs.

### **Principle 3: Respect the Role of States and Let States Come Up With Real Solutions**

Healthcare is inherently a local and personal issue. One-size-fits-all governing doesn’t work. The states created the federal government and our Constitution recognizing the limited role of Washington, D.C., compared to the states. To truly drain the swamp in Washington, D.C., states have to be respected, and there should not be a new “federal” solution to healthcare.

States have historically had the primary role in regulating health insurance under the McCarran-Ferguson Act. Obamacare trampled on these long-standing principles, centralizing health-insurance standards at the federal level. The results have been disastrous.

Proposals being considered in Congress would only slightly reform this Washington, D.C., leviathan, keeping or re-imposing several of Obamacare’s mandates.

Conservative health reforms therefore should focus on empowering states, to allow them to make the decisions that best benefit their citizens. That reform should start with a block grant for Medicaid, allowing states to manage the health of their low-income populations without



federal micro-management. Reforms should also include incentives for states to reform their insurance markets, and liberalize restrictions on providers — for example by removing unnecessary scope-of-practice regulations.

Rather than micro-managing processes, Congress should instead focus on outcomes, and let states innovate. For instance, Congress should provide funding for states to cover individuals with pre-existing conditions, and let states determine the best solutions for them.

Our nation's health care system contains many moving parts—one reason why Congress should not attempt to re-construct the health system from Washington, D.C. Instead, lawmakers should focus on the policies rightly within the federal sphere, and give states the tools they need to make reforms within their sphere. This rubric would restore liberty, begin stemming the tide of rising health costs, and allow the American health system to recover from the Obamacare disaster.