COMMUNITY CATALYST

'New' Senate Health Care Bill Shares Same Strategy to Gut Medicaid, Raise Costs, and Strip Care from Millions

Despite three additional weeks of backroom deals, secret negotiations, and promises of handouts to fellow GOP senators, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell is out with a 'new' bill that features all the same failings of previous versions.

You pay more and get less - that's the Senate health care repeal bill. It makes health care worse for everyone - it raises costs, cuts coverage, weakens consumer protections and guts Medicaid. President Trump and Senate Republicans promised to cover more people, lower costs and protect Medicaid - this bill breaks all of these promises.

They also promised this latest draft would be better than the last Senate version and the House repeal bill passed in May. This bill fails to deliver.

- **Raises costs**. Increases out-of-pocket costs, forcing people to pay more for less coverage.
- **Imposes an age tax.** Allows insurance companies to charge premiums up to five times as much for older adults, *and* scales back the financial assistance that low- and moderate-income older adults receive to help pay their premiums.
- **Makes deep cuts to Medicaid**. The Senate bill not only ends Medicaid expansion it also cuts Medicaid deeply, forcing cuts to home care for older adults, people with disabilities and kids.
- **Weakens consumer protections, including for people with preexisting conditions.** Lets insurance companies offer coverage that excludes out-of-pocket cost sharing limits and services for maternity care, mental health care, substance use disorder treatments, and other services, meaning people with preexisting conditions would have to pay more for the care they need.
- **Keeps billions in tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations.** Gives billions in tax breaks to the wealthy through enhanced health savings accounts and continues massive tax giveaways for big corporations.
- **Defunds Planned Parenthood.** Cutting off reimbursements for services to Planned Parenthood threatens care for 2.4 million people.

Republicans wrote their health care bill in secret because they wanted to hide the damage it would do until the last possible minute.

- They hid from constituents over July 4 recess and are now rushing through the process before a delayed August recess. There still hasn't been a single hearing, a markup, or any

chance for public and expert input, and now they are, once again, forcing a vote within the week.
- A reminder about how the Affordable Care Act became law:
    o The bill was online for 3 months.
    o There were 200 bipartisan hearings and meetings.
    o It was the longest markup in decades -- going on for 7 days.
    o It was on the Senate floor for 25 days.

There is no way to fix this bill -- no matter what backroom deals Sen. McConnell attempts to make in the coming days to buy off certain senators.
- It doesn't matter if you are cutting coverage for 23 million, 20 million or 15 million Americans -- you are still kicking millions of people off of their health care coverage.
- Additional funding to combat the opioid epidemic falls far short in meeting the needs of the millions of Americans who will lose access to treatment for all types of substance use disorders as well as for mental illness.
- Rushing forward on health care repeal shows Republican senators are ignoring the will of the American people.
- From public polls to town hall meetings, people have rejected these plans to repeal health care - instead wanting to keep what works and fix what doesn't.
- Republicans promised us they would never embrace the House health care bill rejected by voters, but that is exactly what they have done yet again.

It is irresponsible for senators to vote on this bill next week. The public should have time to fully understand how this bill will impact their lives and senators have a duty to explain it to their constituents.