

Talking Points and Q & A for Don't Take My Health Care December Events

Topline messages:

- ✓ We are here today to tell President-elect Trump and the Republicans, don't take away our health care. Don't take away my health care, my friend's health care, my daughter's Medicaid, my father's Medicare.
- ✓ Trump and Congressional Republicans are trying to take away our health coverage, hike our costs and put us at the mercy of private health insurance corporations. Their plans would take coverage away from every family in America – working families, children, seniors, people with disabilities – everyone who today or in the future will rely on the Medicare, Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act.
- ✓ Even before the new President is sworn in, the Republicans are trying to jam through Congress a plan that would take away health care from more than 30 million people with no plan to replace that health care or make sure that people don't lose benefits their families depend on.
- ✓ The Republican plan would put the Wall Street health insurance companies back in charge of our health care and take us back to the days when they could discriminate against people with pre-existing conditions, deny coverage for any reason and raise rates at will.
- ✓ Repealing the Affordable Care Act is just the first step. The Republican crusade against health care would also slash funding for Medicaid and trade guaranteed benefits in Medicare for skimpy private insurance vouchers with huge out-of-pocket expenses for seniors and big limits on choice of doctors and hospitals.

Talking about what they want to do to ACA, Medicare and Medicaid:

- ✓ Repealing the Affordable Care Act means 30 million people will lose their coverage and health insurance costs will soar even higher, going back to the days when health the big insurance corporations denied our care.
- ✓ The Republican plan would wreak havoc on the insurance market and hurt everyone with private insurance. They plan to tax the health care people get at work and insurance companies would shift the cost of 30 million people new uninsured people back to the rest of us.
- ✓ Their plan would also shift billions in prescription drug costs to the elderly. Seniors and people with disabilities would be left to fend for themselves and forced to choose between their medicine and other basic necessities like rent and food.
- ✓ Trump and Republicans in Congress want to cut \$1 trillion from state funding from Medicaid, taking coverage away from working families, children, seniors and people with disabilities and wrecking state budgets.
- ✓ The Republican plan hurts hospitals and jeopardizes the jobs of millions of health care providers. It would force many hospitals to cut back services and others to close.
- ✓ Trump and Republicans in Congress want to replace guaranteed Medicare benefits with a skimpy voucher to buy private insurance. It would take away Medicare's guarantee of going to the doctor or hospital you want, without paying a huge amount more for health care.

What should happen:

- ✓ President Trump and Congress need to work together to strengthen our health care to make it work better for everyone, not tear the whole thing down with no plan to make sure families can keep their health care
- ✓ We can't afford health care chaos. We need to protect Medicaid and Medicare. We need quality, affordable health care every family can count on.
- ✓ Instead of repealing the Affordable Care Act, improve it: lower premiums, lower deductibles, better

- choice of doctors and hospitals.
- ✓ Strengthen the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid so that every American has the security of reliable, affordable health coverage.

Questions and Answers on Republican Plans to Take Away Our Health Care

Q. When are Republicans planning to repeal Obamacare?

A. The Republican leadership in Congress says they want to vote to repeal the Affordable Care Act early in January, and put that bill on President Trump's desk as soon as he's in office January 20th. But Republican's haven't come up with a replacement for the 30 million people who will lose their health care coverage. That's why some Republicans are starting to have second thoughts about rushing into repeal.

Q. Won't Republicans replace Obamacare with something else, something they say is better?

A. Republicans have never been able to agree on a "replacement" and every replacement plan they've come up with actually makes things worse: takes away coverage from millions of Americans, causes huge increases in deductibles, allows insurance companies to deny coverage to people with pre-existing conditions and taxes employees with health coverage. That's why some Republicans are getting cold feet and may put off the replacement for 2-3 years. But it's reckless and dangerous to repeal the law without a replacement and families will face dire consequences if Republicans throw out the Affordable Care Act and then take their time with a new plan. In the meantime, with all the rules gone, health insurance corporations will hike premiums even more than now – and not just for those on Obamacare, but for millions of people who buy private insurance on their own.

Q. Republicans say that a Medicaid block grant will put more control in the hands of state governments, where it belongs.

A. A Medicaid block grant is not about state control – states already run Medicaid now – it's about gutting the Medicaid program by cutting \$1 trillion of federal funding to states for Medicaid. Less money to states for Medicaid means taking away coverage and higher costs for the 73 million working people, seniors, and people with disabilities who rely on Medicaid for their health care. It will wreck state budgets as states try to make up the difference and it will force cuts to other programs like education and roads as states find themselves less and less able to balance the budget. Community and rural hospitals that depend on Medicaid the most will have to cut back or close, jeopardizing millions of health care jobs.

Q. Republicans say that Medicare will go bankrupt unless it's reformed.

A. That's one of the big Republican lies. Medicare isn't going bankrupt. In fact, Medicare has a much better record of controlling health insurance costs than private insurance, which inflates costs to make more profit. Unlike Medicare, Insurance companies pay CEOs millions of dollars in salaries, waste money on marketing instead of health care and overpay for prescription drugs. The Republicans plan would bankrupt seniors and people with disabilities on Medicare and enrich the health insurance corporations. Replacing guaranteed benefits in Medicare with a skimpy voucher for private health insurance would result in much higher costs to seniors, particularly if you want to keep Medicare's guarantee of choosing your own doctor or hospital.

Q. What has President-elect Donald Trump said about his plans for health care?

A. On the campaign trail, Trump repeatedly said that it was a bad idea to make changes to Medicaid, Medicare and Social Security—the three programs that Americans depend upon most universally for health care and

security. Yet Trump's choice to head the agency in charge of the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid, Rep. Tim Price from Georgia, is a leader in the Congressional fight to repeal Obamacare, slash Medicaid and privatize Medicare. Every American family should be frightened about what that means for their health care.