



THE HOUSE REPUBLICAN REPEAL BILL THREATENS REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE FOR WOMEN OF COLOR

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Reproductive justice will be attained when all people have the economic, social and political power and means to make decisions about their bodies, sexuality, health and families. Because of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), millions of women of color have gained access to affordable coverage and critical health care. The ACA is working – in the majority of states, more than 80 percent of women of color ages 18-64 are now insured.¹ Conservative lawmakers are gambling with the health and economic stability of Black, Latina and Asian and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women, families and communities. Women of color will be disproportionately impacted by proposed rollbacks to health care coverage and stand to lose the most under the so-called American Health Care Act (AHCA). Our health and lives are on the line.

THE AHCA WOULD PUSH COVERAGE OUT OF REACH FOR WOMEN OF COLOR, EXACERBATING HEALTH DISPARITIES.

The ACA led to significant coverage gains for women of color;² rolling back the ACA's financial supports and coverage expansions will lead to women of color losing health coverage. This means cutting off access to one of the ACA's most important gains for women's health: the guarantee of no-cost-sharing coverage of preventive services. Without coverage, women of color will lose access to the types of services that combat pervasive health disparities, such as contraceptives, screening for breast and cervical cancer and well-woman visits.

- 15 million Black people now have coverage for preventive services without cost sharing.³ Between 2012 and 2014, the uninsured rate among Black women fell by nearly seven percent.⁴
 - Black women have higher breast cancer mortality rates compared to other racial and ethnic groups.⁵ In 2010, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that the breast cancer death rate for Black women aged 45-64 was 60 percent higher than that for white women.⁶ Coverage for preventive services without cost sharing removes barriers to care, enabling Black women to access essential health care such as breast cancer screenings.
- 17 million Latinos/as now have coverage for preventive services without cost sharing, and between 2012 and 2014, the uninsured rate among Latinas fell by nine percent.⁷
 - Cervical cancer is highly preventable, but Latinas have the highest rates of cervical cancer in the United States.⁸ Coverage for preventive services without cost sharing removes barriers to care, enabling Latinas to access essential health care like cervical cancer screenings.
- 8 million Asian-Americans now have coverage for preventive services without cost sharing.⁹ Between 2010 and 2015, the uninsured rate among Asian-Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) fell over 7 percent.¹⁰ Over 2 million Asian-Americans gained coverage under the ACA, giving more AAPI women coverage for preventive services without cost sharing.¹¹
 - Cancer is the leading cause of death for AAPI communities¹², and cervical cancer incidence rate is higher in several Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) subgroups than in non-Hispanic whites. For instance, the incidence rate is twice as high in Cambodians as in non-Hispanic whites, and 40 percent higher among Vietnamese women.¹³

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THE AHCA WOULD DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD FROM THE MEDICAID PROGRAM, JEOPARDIZING WOMEN OF COLOR'S ACCESS TO CRITICALLY IMPORTANT HEALTH CARE.

Defunding Planned Parenthood further threatens women of color's access to essential preventive health services, including reproductive health care such as sexually transmitted infection (STI) testing and treatment, contraceptives and counseling, and cancer screenings.¹⁴ Planned Parenthood health centers provide high-quality primary and preventive health care to many women of color who otherwise would have nowhere to turn for care. Defunding Planned Parenthood would unravel the safety net that our communities rely on for trusted care.

- In 2014, 15 percent of Planned Parenthood patients were Black,¹⁵ 23 percent were Latino/a¹⁶ and four percent were AAPI.¹⁷
- Planned Parenthood health centers are a lifeline for quality health care for underserved communities. Fifty-four percent of Planned Parenthood health centers are in underserved areas. In 21 percent of counties with a Planned Parenthood health center, Planned Parenthood is the only safety-net family planning provider, and in 68 percent of counties with a Planned Parenthood health center, Planned Parenthood serves at least half of all safety-net family planning patients.¹⁸

THE AHCA'S RESTRICTIONS ON ABORTION FUNDING WOULD FURTHER COMPROMISE WOMEN OF COLOR'S ABILITY TO MAKE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH DECISIONS WITH DIGNITY AND WITHOUT POLITICAL INTERFERENCE.

The AHCA would tighten restrictions on those who receive health care tax credits, prohibiting them from purchasing health care plans that include abortion coverage and disincentivizing insurance companies from offering plans that cover abortion care.¹⁹

- Women of color experience disproportionately high rates of unintended pregnancy and²⁰ are more likely to live in poverty,²¹ and thus less likely to be able to afford abortion care (or other health care) out of pocket.
- When politicians restrict insurance coverage of abortion care, low-income families, people of color, immigrant women and youth are hardest hit. A recent study found that a woman who seeks but is denied abortion care is three times more likely to fall into poverty than a woman who is able to get the care she needs.²²

THE AHCA WOULD DECIMATE THE MEDICAID PROGRAM, TAKING AWAY HEALTH CARE FROM MILLIONS OF WOMEN OF COLOR.

The AHCA would essentially gut the Medicaid program by restructuring it into per capita caps, slashing \$880 billion in federal funding and ending the ACA's Medicaid expansion.²³ This will leave many women and families without health care coverage, increasing health and economic disparities for communities of color. Medicaid is integral to women's health. Medicaid finances over half of all births in the United States, and accounts for 75 percent of all public dollars spent on family planning.²⁴

One in five women of reproductive age, and nearly half (48 percent) of all low-income women of reproductive age, are enrolled in the Medicaid program. Medicaid is particularly important for women of color.²⁵

- Nearly one-third (31 percent) of Black women of reproductive age are enrolled in the Medicaid program.²⁶

- Over one quarter (27 percent) of Latinas of reproductive age are enrolled in the Medicaid program.²⁷
- Nearly one-fifth (19 percent) of AAPI women are enrolled in the Medicaid program. The program is particularly important for Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander women.²⁸ For example, 62 percent of Bhutanese women, 43 percent of Hmong women and 32 percent of Pakistani women currently receive their insurance through Medicaid.²⁹

THE AHCA WOULD INCREASE COST SHARING AND PREMIUMS, HITTING WOMEN OF COLOR HARDEST BECAUSE OF GENDER- AND RACE-BASED WAGE GAPS.

The AHCA cuts the financial assistance that low- to middle-income families need to afford coverage, hiking up premium costs. For those who can retain coverage, the AHCA's erosions of Essential Health Benefits standards could drastically increase cost sharing. And, the AHCA's continuous coverage provision allows companies to charge exorbitant penalties for those who have experienced a gap in coverage. Increasing premiums, higher cost sharing and soaring penalties will hit women of color harder because they already earn less due to pervasive racial and gender inequalities. The additional burdens this bill would place on low- to middle-income women of color will push quality, comprehensive health coverage out of reach and exacerbate the already high rates of poverty experienced by Black,³⁰ Latina³¹ and AAPI women.³²

- Black women are typically paid 63 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.³³
- Latinas are paid 54 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.³⁴
- While Asian-American women as a whole earn 85 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander women experience some of the widest wage gaps compared to other racial and ethnic groups. For example, Burmese and Marshallese women make only 44 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.³⁵

The AHCA would have a devastating, long-term impact on women of color's health, economic security and progress. It is an attack on reproductive justice.

¹ National Women's Law Center. (2017, February). *Affordable Care Act Repeal Threatens the Health and Economic Security of 5.1 Million Women of Color Who Recently Gained Insurance Coverage*. Retrieved 17 March 2017, from <http://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/WOC-Health-Coverage-by-State.pdf>

² Ibid.

³ Garrett, B., & Gangopadhyaya, A. (2016, December). *Who Gained Health Insurance Coverage Under the ACA, and Where Do They Live?* Urban Institute Health Policy Center. Retrieved 17 March 2017, from <http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/86761/2001041-who-gained-health-insurance-coverage-under-the-aca-and-where-do-they-live.pdf>; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2015, May). *The Affordable Care Act is Improving Access to Preventive Services for Millions of Americans*. Retrieved 9 February 2017, from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/139221/The%20Affordable%20Care%20Act%20is%20Improving%20Access%20to%20Preventive%20Services%20for%20Millions%20of%20Americans.pdf>

⁴ U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce, Democratic Staff Report. (2016, December). *Turning Back the Clock: Republican Plans to Repeal the Affordable Care Act Will Reverse Progress for Women at 10*. Retrieved 16 December 2016, from <http://democrats-energycommerce.house.gov/sites/democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/files/documents/ACA%20Womens%20Health%20FINAL.pdf>

⁵ Black Women's Health Imperative. *Breast Cancer*. Retrieved 20 March 2017 from <http://www.bwhi.org/issues/breast-cancer/breast-cancer/>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce, Democratic Staff Report. (2016, December). *Turning Back the Clock: Republican Plans to Repeal the Affordable Care Act Will Reverse Progress for Women at 10*. Retrieved 16 December 2016, from <http://democrats-energycommerce.house.gov/sites/democrats.energycommerce.house.gov/files/documents/ACA%20Womens%20Health%20FINAL.pdf>; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2015, May). *The Affordable Care Act is Improving Access to Preventive Services for Millions of Americans*. Retrieved 9 February 2017, from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/139221/The%20Affordable%20Care%20Act%20is%20Improving%20Access%20to%20Preventive%20Services%20for%20Millions%20of%20Americans.pdf>

⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016, June 16). *Cervical Cancer Rates by Race and Ethnicity, 2015*. Retrieved 16 March 2017, from <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/statistics/race.htm>

⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2015, May). *The Affordable Care Act is Improving Access to Preventive Services for Millions of Americans*. Retrieved 9 February 2017, from

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¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau. (2010 and 2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*, Table S0201. Retrieved 21 February 2017, from https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_15_1YR_S0201&prodType=table

¹¹ Chu, R., Wong, D., Robinson, W., & Fingold, K. (2012, April 1). *The Affordable Care Act and Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders*. Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Retrieved 22 March 2017, from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/report/affordable-care-act-and-asian-americans-and-pacific-islanders>

¹² American Cancer Society. (2016). *Special Section: Cancer in Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders* at 26. Retrieved 16 March 2017, from <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2016/special-section-cancer-in-asian-americans-native-hawaiians-and-pacific-islanders-cancer-facts-and-figures-2016.pdf>

¹³ American Cancer Society. (2016). *Special Section: Cancer in Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders* at 34. Retrieved 16 March 2017, from <https://www.cancer.org/content/dam/cancer-org/research/cancer-facts-and-statistics/annual-cancer-facts-and-figures/2016/special-section-cancer-in-asian-americans-native-hawaiians-and-pacific-islanders-cancer-facts-and-figures-2016.pdf>

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¹⁵ Planned Parenthood. (2016, December 7). *The Urgent Need for Planned Parenthood Health Centers*. Retrieved 16 March 2017, from https://www.plannedparenthood.org/files/4314/8183/5009/20161207_Defunding_fs_d01_1.pdf

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Planned Parenthood. (2015). Unpublished raw data.

¹⁸ Planned Parenthood. (2016, December 7). *The Urgent Need for Planned Parenthood Health Centers*. Retrieved 16 March 2017, from https://www.plannedparenthood.org/files/4314/8183/5009/20161207_Defunding_fs_d01_1.pdf (citing Letter from Jennifer J. Frost, Principal Research Scientist, Guttmacher Institute, to Lisa Ramirez-Branum, Analyst, Congressional Budget Office (CBO). (2015, August 14)).

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