



# Legislative Brief

July 18, 2017

## MEDICAID FOR THE POOR OR WILL IT BE TAX CUTS FOR THE WEALTHY?

Speaker Paul Ryan pushed the House of Representatives' Version of Trump's budget through at hurricane speed and was labeled as "mean" by President Trump. The Senate created a new bill without giving any Democrats input. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell hit a brick wall when the bill stripped out Medicaid Expansion and created a wealthy tax cut in its place. To pass the bill he needed 50 Republicans but five GOP Senators would not agree to the removal of Medicaid. Susan Collins from Maine, Rob Portman from Ohio, Shelly Moore Capito of West Virginia, Dean Heller of Nevada and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska.

The Congressional Budget Office prepared its report scoring the impact upon low-income American families and reported that the bill would increase the number of uninsured to 22 million by 2026 compared to keeping the Affordable Care Act in place. It would also reduce the number of people on Medicaid by 15 million by 2026. The tax cuts would amount to \$54 billion in the Senate bill. In terms of its cost to individuals the CBO estimated that a 40 year-old with an annual income of \$56,800 would pay about \$5000 in yearly health insurance premiums under the Republican bill that does away with Medicaid. But a 64 year-old making the same money would pay \$4400 in yearly under Obamacare compared to \$16,000 a year under the Senate Health bill. This legislation would generally reduce the percentage of income that younger people are required to pay toward the premiums and increase the percentage of income for older persons. Many Americans would get less help under the Senate plan than they get under Medicaid.

"Rich people who see a brother or sister in need, yet close their hearts against them: cannot claim that they love God.

(1 John 3:17 UBS)

As members of a Faith Community, we are being called to help those less fortunate than us and ask our U.S Senators to save their MEDICAID EXPANSION!

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Senator Susan Collins R-Me. Said, "I want to work with my GOP and Dem colleagues to fix the flaws in the Affordable Health Care. The CBO analysis shows that the Senate bill won't do it. I will vote NO on the bill. Senator Dean Heller(R-NV) said that he opposes the Senate bill in its present form, because it takes insurance away from tens of millions of low and middle class Americans.

Why do we have so many wealthy Senators whose first priority is to pass tax cuts with so little concern for healthcare and food stamps for those less fortunate?

Under the Senate bill the biggest winners are households making \$250,000 a year or more which would repeal two different taxes; households with many investments would come out particularly far ahead.

In the 31 states(and Wash.D.C.) that expanded Medicaid following the Affordable Care Act, all adults earning up to 138% of the federal poverty level were eligible for Medicaid. The Senate bill would end Medicaid Expansion starting in 2021. Under current law the federal government still pays 95% of the total cost to the States. This winds down to 90% in 2020 and stays at that level permanently.

Another financial loser under the Senate bill will be seniors, disabled and others who qualified for Medicaid even before Obamacare.

Phasing out Medicaid Expansion and slashing funding for the program

by capping federal dollars will primarily harm working Ohioans who rely on Medicaid for their health care to remain in their jobs or find new jobs. 49% of Ohioans enrolled in Medicaid Expansion are working in present jobs. Adding to the harm, the Senate included an additional amendment that would limit a person's ability to get health care coverage if they were currently without insurance. In 2019, people who fail to prove they had "continuous coverage" for the prior 12 months would have to wait 6 months or longer for their benefits to start if they seek insurance in the individual insurance market. Many people who have expensive health needs or pre-existing conditions would be forced to wait.

The following people are at risk of losing coverage. 1) People covered by Medicaid Expansion in Ohio: 700,000 people at the present time. 2) Low-income children, seniors, and disabled. 3) People with pre-existing conditions 4) People purchasing in the marketplace. 5) People with employer insurance.

A poll released late in June this year by Quinnipiac University shows that 56 per cent of American voters disapprove of the Republican health-care alternatives while only 16 per cent favor it. It's a huge tax cut for the drug companies—and the richest 400 families, they will get a \$7million tax cut for the next 10 years.