



# Nation awaits Trump health care plan

**The Republicans are after your health care.** Again. President Trump, who failed miserably during his first attempt to scuttle the Affordable Care Act, famously blamed the unknown complexities of the issue for the fiasco, saying, “Now, I have to tell you, it’s an unbelievably complex subject. Nobody knew health care could be so complicated.”

Despite polls that clearly show destroying the ACA doesn’t resonate with voters who have come to value its benefits, Trump has declared himself ready to try and demolish it again: “Let me tell you exactly what my message is. The Republican Party will soon be known as the party of health care. You watch.”

Trump directed the Department of Justice to stop defending the ACA and start supporting the complete elimination of the law as envisioned by 20 Republican state attorneys general who allege the Act is unconstitutional and are now buoyed by a judicial decision in their favor. If they ultimately prevail, say goodbye to coverage

of pre-existing conditions and welcome back lifetime caps on coverage. Parents won’t be able to provide a health care safety net by covering their children up to age 26. Medicaid expansion to childless adults will disappear, bringing back record rates of uninsured Americans. About 20 million people are at risk of losing coverage, courtesy of the party of health care.

So far, no one but Trump is even pretending the Republicans have a replacement health care plan. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell isn’t. He told Politico he looks “forward to seeing what the president is proposing and what he can work out with the speaker.” He knows Nancy Pelosi and House Democrats aren’t going to play the “Let’s replace Obamacare” game with Trump, even if some of his GOP colleagues are eager to jump into the fray.

Democrats pounced quickly, eager to exploit the issue. According to the Nevada Independent, during a Democratic Governors Association press call, Governor Steve Sisolak told reporters, “If the ACA

were completely dismantled, it would have disastrous and sweeping consequences for Nevada’s entire health care system and leave hundreds of thousands of Nevadans twisting in the wind.” Sisolak says 25 percent of people under the age of 65 in Nevada have pre-existing conditions, and 211,000 now have health insurance thanks to Medicaid expansion.

Nevada’s Democratic state legislators have been busy codifying sections of the Affordable Care Act into state statutes. In 2017, requirements for coverage of many preventive services, including contraceptives, were placed into state law. This session, they will surely add protections for pre-existing conditions. If the ACA is repealed, insurance companies doing business in Nevada would have to factor in these elements when pricing their products.

But access to affordable, quality health care shouldn’t be a state by state decision, preventing people from moving for fear of losing coverage. Poor, childless adults have suffered in states that chose not to expand

Medicaid, watching helplessly as their tax dollars are siphoned off to states like Nevada, which did choose to expand.

We aren’t going to wake up tomorrow and have a national insurance plan. But we can get there by adopting a public option, something that should have been included in the original Affordable Care Act but was bargained away in order to keep the private insurance industry on board. Steadily expanding the populations served by Medicaid and Medicare is a path that can get us there with minimal chaos and disruption

Trump now says he will campaign on his new and improved health care plan, but the vote won’t take place until after the 2020 election. That gives you time to ask every Republican running for office next year if they’re with the president on health care. If they are, that’s all you need to know. □

For an introduction to Trump’s health care guy—Florida Sen. Rick Scott—who presided over a \$1.7 billion health care fraud, go to <https://bit.ly/2FT92JY>.

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