



SISTERS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD
NATIONAL ADVOCACY CENTER
Rise Up AND Act for Justice

Statement for Submission to

Hearing to Consider the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson Proposal
Senate Finance Committee
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from

Lawrence E. Couch, Director
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
504 Hexton Hill Road
Silver Spring, MD 20904

Affordable, universal health care is not a privilege, but a requirement to protect the life and dignity of every person. The government has an obligation to ensure that affordable health care is accessible and available to everyone.

The National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd calls on the United States Senate NOT to pass the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson proposal which would repeal the Affordable Care Act and eliminate health care coverage for millions.

As the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops stated in July, "Reform efforts must begin with the principle that health care is not a privilege, but a right in keeping with the life and dignity of every person. All people need and should have access to comprehensive, quality health care. Reform efforts should consider people's differing circumstances and ensure access which is in accord with their means. Every individual and family must be able to see clearly how they will fit within and access the health care system in a way that truly meets their needs, and immigrants must be included among them."

The Order of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd was founded in France in 1835 and has dedicated itself to serving poor and marginal people around the world. The Sisters have had a presence in the United States for over 175 years and are known for their work with victims of human trafficking and domestic abuse and with women and children living in poverty. The work of the Sisters and their lay partners in 70 countries in 5 continents, 22 States, and 1 U.S. Territory is based on the belief that everyone, regardless of age, sex, culture or religion, has the right to a basic quality of life, adequate income, shelter, opportunities for education and employment, quality health care, and nutrition.

As Catholics, our faith requires that everyone should be treated with the utmost dignity and respect, and that means NOT stripping away their access to affordable and quality health care.

The legislation offered by Senators Bill Cassidy and Lindsey Graham and others would completely eliminate the ACA's marketplace subsidies, which currently help almost 9 million people afford coverage. Unlike under earlier Republican bills, which substituted highly inadequate tax credits,

moderate-income working people buying individual market coverage would no longer be guaranteed any assistance.

The bill also would purge 11 million low-income adults from Medicaid who were added thanks to the ACA's expansion of Medicaid in their states.

In addition, Cassidy-Graham would dramatically redistribute funding across states, meaning that many states - especially Medicaid expansion states and states with high marketplace costs - would see far deeper cuts.

The legislation would end completely after 2026 - as if the need to help low- and moderate-income people afford coverage would just disappear overnight. The last repeal-and-replace bill was estimated to leave 32 million people without health insurance. This legislation looks to impact many more.

This legislative battle is about people's health and their lives. Think of the older adults, people with disabilities, and families with children who will be adversely affected, unable to receive regular, affordable medical care. This legislation is not what the doctor ordered.

The National Advocacy Center educates and advocates on social justice issues for the transformation of society to the benefit of all people reflecting the spirituality, history and mission of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. NAC advocates at the Federal level for people living in poverty, immigrants, victims of human trafficking, victims of domestic abuse, and other vulnerable populations.