

## HEALTH CARE UPDATE FROM NEW YORKERS FOR HEALTHCARE - JUNE 14, 2017

The US Senate has sent Health Care bill to the CBO for scoring. We're working against the clock at this point to slow this bill down in the Senate as Majority Leader McConnell works hard to keep it moving so he can meet his deadline. The process is not getting a lot of coverage or headlines in the press, but we wish to be clear that the proposal, which is problematic in so many ways, is advancing and poses a real threat.

One way you can act is to join a phone bank in your area to contact constituents in states with Republican Senators. Click here to see dates and phone bank locations:

<http://newyorkersforhealthcare.org/event/>

Here is more background on where we are on this legislation.

Key GOP centrists open to ending Medicaid expansion:

<http://thehill.com/.../336814-key-gop-centrists-open-to-endin...>

Sens. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) and Shelley Moore Capito (R-W.Va.) have proposed a seven-year phase-out of federal funding for the Medicaid expansion, beginning in 2020 and ending in 2027. \*Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) proposed a shorter, three-year phase-out that would end in 2023 at the Senate lunch on Tuesday. Most believe it will end up with 7-year phase in period that begins w date of enactment. So that means the 7-year phase out runs from 2017 to 2024. We also understand that no cuts would begin until 2020. So they call it a 7-year phase out, but it's really 4 years - 2020 to 2024

They would not allow states to waive community rating rules - so insurance companies could not charge you more based on health status/pre-existing condition. BUT, states could waive essential health benefit requirements. So an insurer could exclude mental health benefits in order to screen out people who need them. Or could exclude diabetes care to screen out diabetics.

We think that it will allow plans to Charge older people 5 times as much as younger people. Current ratio is 1:3.

It will include per capita caps for Medicaid and appears that the annual escalator will be same as House bill. (see below)

Portman's and Capito's willingness to end the program is significant, in that it suggests centrists will not demand that the Medicaid expansion be permanent, and that Republicans may be able to find common ground on the critical issue if the additional federal funds are phased down more slowly.

CBPP makes a strong case here: Reported Medicaid Expansion "Compromise" Would Have Almost the Same Effect as House Bill

Now, Senate Republicans are reportedly coalescing around what may be an even worse Medicaid "compromise." Senators Dean Heller, Rob Portman, Shelley Moore Capito, and others are supporting a phasedown of Medicaid expansion funding, with funding cuts still beginning in 2020.

That approach would not preserve anyone's coverage in the long run. It also would do next to nothing to preserve Medicaid expansion in the short run.

First, at least eight Medicaid expansion states — Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New Mexico, and Washington — have expansion “trigger laws” under which their Medicaid expansions automatically end if the federal matching rate for expansion enrollees falls at all. Under the reported proposal, these state triggers would go off in 2020 — just like under the House health bill.

Second, even non-trigger states would see their costs for new expansion enrollees rise significantly starting in 2020. Few state legislatures will choose to come up with extra funding to keep their expansions going when they know that the federal funding cuts — and required state funding increase — will just keep rising each year. More likely, even non-trigger states would freeze enrollment starting in 2020. If so, their expansions would be more than two-thirds gone by the end of 2021 and virtually eliminated by the end of 2024.

<http://www.cbpp.org/.../reported-medicaid-expansion-compromis...>

[Upcoming Events – New Yorkers For Healthcare](#)  
newyorkersforhealthcare.org