



January 23, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building, H-232
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building, H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, S-230
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
U.S. Capitol Building, S-221
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Pelosi and Minority Leader Schumer:

America's 3.6 million registered nurses (RNs) are profoundly committed to ensuring and providing high quality care for all. Nurses provide expert, compassionate care for people through all stages of life and work in every health care setting. As the nation's largest group of health care professionals and most trusted profession, nurses are the linchpin of the health care delivery system and at the forefront of improving the health of our nation.

For decades, the American Nurses Association (ANA) has advocated for health care system reforms that would guarantee access to high-quality, affordable health care for all. ANA opposes efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act without first putting forward a comprehensive health care plan that embraces the following principles:

1. Protect Americans against being denied insurance coverage because of pre-existing conditions and provide access to affordable health insurance coverage plans that offer a minimum standard of benefits including: Preventative services and screenings, inpatient and outpatient services, rehabilitative and habilitative services, prescription drug coverage, mental health, maternity services, and chronic disease management.
2. Promote and support cost-effective preventive health services.
 - Primary health care that is focused on developing an engaged partnership with the patient.
 - Care coordination services that reduce costs and improve patient outcomes with consistent payment for all qualified health professionals delivering such services, including nurses.
 - Remove barriers and restrictions that prevent RNs and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) from contributing fully to patient care in all communities.

3. Embrace innovative health delivery models that encourage wellness, prevention, and coordinated care in order to bring down cost and make health insurance affordable for all.
 - Continue to move away from a fee-for service reimbursement model and reward quality care and the effective utilization of resources.
 - Ensure that deductibles and co-payments are not a barrier to receiving care.
 - Eliminate lifetime caps or annual limits on coverage.
 - Incentivize all Americans to purchase insurance coverage - maintaining federal subsidies based on an income-based sliding scale is critical to achieving that goal.
 - Retain coverage for children under the age of 26 under their parents insurance.
 - Support the expansion of Medicaid as a safety net for the most vulnerable, including the chronically ill, elderly and poor.
 - Empower consumers to make informed choices about their healthcare options by making prices and quality metrics more transparent.

4. Build a workforce that meets the demand of a growing and challenging health care system and population.
 - Encourage workforce development policies to ensure an adequate supply of well-educated, well-distributed registered nurses.
 - Incentivize people to enter primary care through grant and loan repayment programs.
 - Ensure an adequate nursing faculty to support the demand for a robust nurse workforce.

ANA looks forward to working with you to address our nation's health care challenges. We look forward to sharing the expertise of nurses as you seek to improve our health care system and the health of our nation. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact me (michelle.artz@ana.org).

Sincerely,

Michelle Artz
Director of Government Affairs
American Nurses Association

CC:
The Honorable Greg Walden
The Honorable Frank Pallone
The Honorable Kevin Brady
The Honorable Richard Neal
The Honorable Orrin Hatch
The Honorable Ron Wyden
The Honorable Lamar Alexander
The Honorable Patty Murray