

September 19, 2017

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

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and our 37,000 members write to share our deep concerns with the recently released proposal from Senators Cassidy, Graham, Heller, and Johnson to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. We urge you not to bring this amendment to the Senate floor for consideration, as its passage would have devastating impacts on millions of Americans.

ACEP cannot support any legislation that does not include emergency medical care as a covered benefit in health insurance. The Affordable Care Act included emergency services as an essential health benefit, and any replacement legislation must do the same. Yet the Cassidy-Graham-Heller-Johnson Amendment to H.R. 1628, the American Health Care Act, allows states to easily forego requiring insurers to adhere to important consumer protections, including the requirement to cover the ten essential health benefits, and protections for those with pre-existing conditions.

We are very alarmed by reports that the Senate might proceed to a vote on this proposal without a full score by the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) on both coverage and financial impacts of the Cassidy-Graham-Heller-Johnson amendment. It is clear that the proposal would result in tens of millions of Americans losing health insurance coverage through its drastic cuts to the Medicaid program, destabilization of health insurance markets, and decreased access to affordable coverage and care. The proposal directly challenges many of ACEP's health care reform principles that we shared with you at the start of the 115th Congress' health care reform debate, and would result in devastating consequences for emergency medicine patients.

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Americans overwhelmingly (95 percent) say health insurance companies should cover emergency medical care¹ and emergency physicians agree with them. Patients can't choose when and where they will need emergency care, and they shouldn't be punished financially for having emergencies. We urge you to halt consideration of the Cassidy-Graham-Heller-Johnson amendment, and instead work together in a bipartisan, bicameral, multi-stakeholder effort to cultivate a health care system that expands access for patients, protects consumers, encourages innovation, and ensures the continued availability of health care providers.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the head of our Washington, D.C. office, Laura Wooster, MPH (lwooster@acep.org), or any member of our congressional affairs team.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebecca B. Parker, MD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rebecca B. Parker, MD, FACEP
ACEP President

CC: Senator Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Senator Lindsey Graham
Senator Dean Heller
Senator Ron Johnson

¹ [Morning Consult poll](#), Feb 9-10, 2017.