



Illinois Health and Hospital Association

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Senate Health Bill Retains Drastic Medicaid Changes

U.S. Senate Republican leaders today released draft legislation, the [Better Care Reconciliation Act \(BCRA\)](#) to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and make drastic changes to the Medicaid program. Like the previous discussion draft, the bill retains a phase down of the federal matching rate for Medicaid expansion, which would trigger an end to Illinois' Medicaid expansion as of Jan. 1, 2021, and per capita caps and block grants. A previous Congressional Budget Office analysis indicated that those changes to Medicaid would reduce federal Medicaid spending by more than \$770 billion or 26 percent by 2026 and by 35 percent by 2036, as well as reduce Medicaid enrollment by 15 million people by 2026.

Changes to the Senate bill include: allowing insurers to sell policies that do not meet current ACA standards as proposed by Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas; adding another \$70 billion in a "stability fund" for states to use to help insurers curb the growth of consumers' premiums and out-of-pocket costs; and adding another \$45 billion for states to use to fight drug addiction, including opioids. The bill keeps investment and payroll taxes on high-income people that helped fund the ACA and a tax on the salaries of high-income insurance executives. However, the revised proposal does not increase tax credits to help people obtain coverage, keeping a smaller, scaled-down tax credit.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) made [remarks](#) on the Senate floor regarding the BCRA discussion draft that was released today: "The American people deserve better than Obamacare. Across the country, Americans are paying more for less under Obamacare. Already, Obamacare premiums have increased on average by more than 100% on the federal exchange. Next year, Obamacare premiums could rise by as much as 50% or more in states like Georgia and Maryland...After extensive consultations across the conference, numerous meetings with constituents, and intensive conversations with Members, our conference has updated last month's Better Care discussion draft with additional provisions to

make it even stronger...I encourage everyone to review it. As before, it aims to stabilize and reform the collapsing insurance markets that have left too many with no options under Obamacare, and it aims to make insurance more affordable and more flexible so it's something Americans actually want to buy.”

Illinois Senator Dick Durbin released a [statement](#), saying: “Congressional Republicans’ approach to repealing health care reminds me of the famous Albert Einstein exclamation: ‘The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results.’”

“This bill will still force millions of Americans to lose their health insurance, increase costs, and put critical health care services beyond the reach of hard-working American families, all to give wealthy corporations—including insurance and drug companies—a tax break. It is past time for Republicans to give up this partisan approach to health care and work with their Democratic colleagues across the aisle – who are willing and waiting – to improve the health care system for all Americans.”

IHA continues to oppose the Better Care Reconciliation Act and is urging the Senate to reject the bill, and the members of the Illinois House Delegation to oppose it if it passes the Senate. (See [IHA's letter to the editor](#) on the Senate bill.)

Staff contact: [Cristina Batt](#)

KFF: Higher Premiums for 1.5M Under BCRA

A [new analysis](#) from the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) released on Tuesday, estimates that 1.5 million people with pre-existing conditions could face higher premiums based on the amendment by Sen. Ted Cruz to the revised draft of Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA), the Senate’s proposed replacement for the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Under the Senate health bill, people with incomes below 350 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for tax credits to defray premium costs; people with incomes above this threshold who have pre-existing conditions would be at risk of paying full, unaffordable rates for plans that covered their health needs.

The new analysis estimates that 1.5 million people in the non-group insurance market with incomes of 350 percent of the federal poverty level or higher had a pre-existing condition that would have been considered automatically deniable by insurers prior to the ACA. If these individuals could buy cheaper, non-compliant plans, they could still be left with unaffordable medical bills for uncovered care.

AR Surveys Needed by July 28

IHA is asking members to participate in the second quarter Medicaid, State of Illinois Preferred Provider Organization (PPO) and Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCO) Aging Accounts Receivable Balances surveys for April – June 2017. Doing so helps to keep IHA abreast of continuing payment cycle issues that will assist us in our advocacy efforts.

The Medicaid (FFS) and State of Illinois PPO Excel surveys are available [here](#), with specific tabs for each. The Medicaid MCO Excel is available [here](#). Information is requested on a plan-specific basis. Please complete these files by July 28 and email them to [Karen Schrimpl](#) or fax them to Jo Ann Spoor at 217-789-8932.

According to the results of our previous quarterly survey, for hospitals reporting accounts receivable outstanding for the quarter ending March 31, 2017, the average numbers of days that accounts were outstanding were: 227 days for Medicaid (FFS), 328 days for the State of Illinois PPO and 169 days for the Medicaid MCO.

Staff contact: [Jo Ann Spoor](#)

Kaufman to Retire After 42 Years at IHA

Chief Operating Officer Sue Kaufman will retire next week after 42 years of outstanding service at IHA. Kaufman's journey at IHA began in 1975. One merger and thirteen job titles later, Kaufman ends her career on a high note as the second in command, next to IHA President and CEO A.J. Wilhelmi.

"In her 42 years with IHA, Sue Kaufman has been instrumental in advancing our mission of serving the Illinois hospital community and strengthening healthcare across the state," said Wilhelmi. "Sue's dedication to our members and our staff has been remarkable during her long tenure with the association, and her wisdom and guidance as a member of our senior leadership team has been invaluable. Sue will be sorely missed, and we wish her the very best in retirement."

When asked about what she will miss the most, Kaufman says, "The people. She officially retires July 17.

Read IHA's press release [here](#). Photos are posted on our [Facebook page](#).

IHA's Weekly Regional Roundup

This week, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle announced that more than 1,100 county employees will receive layoff notices as a result of a temporary restraining order preventing the collection of the county's sweetened beverage tax. Elsewhere, the Lake County Board of Health announced a hearing on July 21 to receive public comment on proposed regulations banning the sale of tobacco products to anyone under the age of 21. Also, Will County was the recipient of a grant to further efforts to combat the opioid overdose epidemic. [Click here](#) for more.

Briefly Noted

Norwegian American Hospital will receive an AHA NOVA award on July 29 for its Pediatric Care-A-Van, which provides preventive care – including physicals, immunizations and screenings for lead, hemoglobin, hearing and vision – to local underserved children in a partnership with Chicago Public Schools. The AHA NOVA Award recognizes hospitals and health

systems for their collaborative efforts toward improving community health. Read more [here](#).

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