Another HIV Call-In Day to Save Health Care

UPDATE: The call-in date is rescheduled for Wednesday, July 19. The current Senate bill may be dead, but the fight is not over.

July 17, 2017

UPDATE: Because of recent developments in the Senate, the current health care reform bill no longer has the votes to pass. This does not mean that the Affordable Care Act (ACA, or Obamacare) is safe. In fact, Republicans are now considering a repeal-and-delay bill. As a result, the call-in day to save health care has been rescheduled to Wednesday, July 19. Stay tuned for updated info and talking points.

Below is the original (and now outdated) post.

It's time to pick up the phone and fight for your health care (again). Last month, on June 26, AIDS activists organized National HIV Call-In Day to Save Health Care. It was a nationwide effort of the HIV community to convince U.S. senators to reject the catastrophic GOP health care bill. And it worked.

But now a revised version of the Senate's Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA) is slated to come up for a vote. (For more about that bill, click here.) Not giving up the fight, activists have planned Tuesday, July 18, as another call-in day. But, as AIDS United points out, it's good to call every day.

Not sure whom to call or what to say? Below, we're reprinting our newsfeed item from the first call-in day.

An action alert put out by Positive Women's Network—USA lists these steps:

GET THE FACTS:

- Find out how Medicaid cuts would affect your state with these 50 state (and DC) fact sheets from Georgetown University Center for Children and Families and National Health Law Program. The fact sheets are in Word format so that you can brand them with your organization's logo if you wish and use them in in-person visits with legislators and their staff.

- Want to do more to stop the GOP from taking away our health care? Here's a quick guide from The Nation with some great actions you can take.

- Learn from members of the President's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS how the health care bill could kill thousands unnecessarily.

TAKE ACTION!

- Call the HIV Hotline TODAY! Call 866-246-9371 to be connected to your Senators. You can tell them:

  "My name is _____ and I live in [city, ZIP]. I'm a person [living with/concerned about] HIV and I'm calling to urge Senator ____ to reject any health care bill that contains cuts or caps to Medicaid. Over 40% of people living with HIV depend on Medicaid for their health care; cuts and caps would lead to unnecessary deaths. We are counting on Senator ____ to stand up for his constituents and for what's right and reject any cuts or caps to Medicaid!"

- Do you work or volunteer for an organization that provides services for or advocates for people who would be affected by the changes to health care? Have some friends and family who are also worried about the impending health care disaster? Make the most of the HIV Hotline and organize a phone bank! Our partners at AIDS Foundation of Chicago have put together a great tool kit for organizing a phone bank to mobilize a greater number of people to call their senators about the health care bill, which you can find here.

- Here is a list of high-priority targets (and their legislative assistants) you can call and write:

ARIZONA: Sen. JEFF FLAKE (R)
Legislative Assistant Helen Heiden helen_heiden@flake.senate.gov 202-224-4521

ARKANSAS: Sen. Thomas Cotton (R),
Legislative Assistant Abigail Welborn abigail_welborn@cotton.senate.gov 202-224-2353

ALABAMA: Sen. Luther Strange (R)
Legislative Assistant Nick Moore Nick_Moore@strange.senate.gov 202-224-4124

ALASKA: Sen. Murkowski (R)

HELP Committee Legislative Aide Morgan_Griffin@murkowski.senate.gov 202-224 6665
Legislative Director Garrett_Boyle@murkowski.senate.gov 202-224-6665

COLORADO: Sen. Cory Gardner (R)
Legislative Director Curtis Swager curtis_swager@gardner.senate.gov 202-224-5941
Legislative Assistant Alison_toal@gardner.senate.gov 202-224-5941

LOUISIANA: Sen. Bill Cassidy (R)
Senior Health Policy Adviser Matt Gallivan matthew_gallivan@cassidy.senate.gov 202-224-5824
Research Analyst Davis Mills David_Mills@cassidy.senate.gov 202-224-5824

MAINE: Sen. Susan Collins (R)
Legislative Assistant Elizabeth Allen elizabeth_allen@aging.senate.gov 202-224-2523

OHIO: Sen. Rob Portman (R)
Legislative Assistant Sarah Schmidt sarah_schmidt@portman.senate.gov 202-224-3353

NEVADA: Sen. Dean Heller (R)
Legislative Assistant Rachel Green Rachel_Green@heller.senate.gov 202-224-6244

TENNESSEE: Sen. Lamar Alexander (R)
David Cleary, Chief of Staff david_cleary@help.senate.gov 202-224-4944
HELP Committee Health Staff Mary-Sumpter Lapinski MarySumpter_Lapinski@help.senate.gov (202) 224-6770

WEST VIRGINIA: Sen. Shelley Moore Capito (R)
Legislative Assistant Dana Richter dana_richter@capito.senate.gov 202-224-6472
Legislative Correspondent Mike Fischer Mike_Fischer@capito.senate.gov 202-228-1395

WISCONSIN: Sen. Ronald Johnson (R)
Legislative Director Sean Riley sean_riley@ronjohnson.senate.gov 202-224-5323

Similarly, AIDS United lists several steps you can take on the call-in day:

Urge your constituents, colleagues, friends, relatives or anyone you can reach to use the HIV Hotline and participate in the National Call-In Day on June 26. It’s easy!

1. Call 866-246-9371.
2. When asked provide your ZIP code. You will be directed to key senators in your state.

3. Tell the person who answers: your name; where you live; that you are a person with HIV or a person affected by HIV; that the American Health Care Act will cause people with HIV to lose health care coverage; and that you urge the senator to oppose the American Health Care Act.

When reaching out to your senators and governors or spreading the message in your networks and on social media, drive the following points home:

Key Talking Points

1. The Senate bill is essentially the same as the House bill.

- They are taking care away from millions of people.
- Costs will continue to skyrocket—this bill does not solve that problem.
- They are ending Medicaid as we know it; this will target the most vulnerable populations, including people living with HIV/AIDS, people with disabilities, seniors in nursing homes and children.
- Funding is going to a tax cut for the most well-off Americans.
- Many senators respond to veterans' needs. Drive home the message that veterans and their families will lose coverage with this bill.

2. This bill is being rushed to a vote and created in secret.

- There is no transparency.
- We may have 48 hours after the CBO score is released; this is not enough for the public to fully understand, appreciate and respond.

3. The Senate is breaking their promises, and we will hold them accountable.

- They said that people will not lose coverage, insurance will be cheaper and more available and that people with preexisting conditions will not be turned down for insurance.
- They are breaking promises with this bill. We will remember and hold them accountable.

For more, read "Urgent Action Alert: Help #KillTheBill."

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