Zombie Health Care Bill Refuses to Die

Despite setbacks, GOP Senators still vow to repeal and replace Obamacare. HIV advocates plan another call-in day on Monday, July 24.

July 21, 2017 By AIDS United

Unfortunately for the HIV advocacy community, the apparent death of the Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA) at the beginning of the week proved to be exaggerated by the end of the week. In a disturbing replay of the House resurrection of Congressional Republicans' efforts to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Republican Senators agreed to try again to agree on a bill after a working lunch at the White House on Wednesday. However, despite optimistic remarks from Republican leadership, there is no sign as of yet that the intraparty conflicts that have plagued the BCRA are any closer to being resolved.

The turmoil surrounding the Senate health care bill began in earnest on Monday evening when two conservative Republican Senators, Utah's Mike Lee and Kansas's Jerry Moran took to Twitter to join Senators Rand Paul (R-KY) and Susan Collins (R-ME) in opposing the amended BCRA, effectively bringing the GOP's repeal and replace efforts to a dead stop.

Upon hearing the news of the defections, President Trump—who had been having a dinner with a group of pro-BCRA Senators in an effort to drum up support for the bill—took to Twitter to fire off a few thoughts of his own on the matter, tweeting that, "Republicans should just REPEAL failing ObamaCare now & work on a new Healthcare Plan that will start from a clean slate. Dems will join in!"

For a moment, The White House and Senate Republican Leadership appeared to be on the same page, as Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell released a statement calling for a vote to be held the following week to repeal the ACA with no immediate replacement plan in place, as President Trump had suggested. The plan, which would have repealed the ACA with a 2 year delay in implementation to provide Republicans with time to craft a replacement, was quickly rejected by a group of moderate Republican Senators who saw it as an irresponsible and damaging approach that would harm their constituents.

Senators Collins, Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), came out against Majority Leader McConnell's "repeal -and -delay" plan on Tuesday, dooming the vote to failure and widening the rift between the moderate and conservative factions of the Republican Party. Notably, all of the public opponents to the repeal and delay plan are women Senators who have been strongly attuned to health care for their constituents. Senator Capito summarized the rationale behind the Senators' opposition to a piece of legislation that would rip health insurance

away from 32 million Americans in a manner that was as simple as it was powerful, saying, "I did not come to Washington to hurt people."

The opposition of both dyed-in-the-wool conservatives like Moran and Lee as well as moderate Republicans like Capito, Collins, and Murkowski, seemed for a brief moment like the final nails in coffin for the GOP's repeal and replace efforts. However, President Trump changed his mind on the BCRA, inviting Senate Republicans to the White House on Wednesday for an awkward luncheon where he alternately berated and pleaded with the Senators to push their health care bill through come hell or high water. He demanded that the Senate not adjourn for August recess until he had ACA replacement legislation on his desk. Feeding off the energy and pressure of their lunch with the President, a group of Senators held a closed door, late-night meeting to try and iron out their differences around the BCRA. However, while some Senators said progress was being made, there has been nothing yet to suggest that they are any closer to bridging the divides between them over the BCRA than they were at the start of the week.

However, despite all of the setbacks and obstacles in their way, it cannot be stressed enough that the BCRA is not dead. The moment we are living in right now bears an eerie similarity to the political landscape this past spring, when it looked for all the world that Paul Ryan would be unable to get the 216 votes he needed to move the American Health Care Act through the House. And yet, despite being beset on all sides by the seemingly irreconcilable ideological differences among his Republican colleagues, he managed to push the legislation through.

In the House, many of us made the mistake of assuming the death of the GOP's draconian health care plan before it had actually drawn its last breath. We cannot afford to make the same mistake again. Whereas before our underestimation of Republican leadership simply meant that their repeal and replace plans would move from the House to the Senate, a similar error now would mean almost certain passage of a bill that would rip health care away from at least 22 million people.

Now is not the time to get tired or let off the gas. With the Senate health care bill attempting once more to rise from the dead, now is the time to take action and let your Senators know that any repeal and replace or repeal and delay plan the results in even one person losing their health care is unacceptable. We at AIDS United urge every person living with or affected by HIV to continue to advocate by calling or tweeting at Senators easily using the Trumpcare Toolkit or send your state's Senators a letter using AIDS United's latest action alert.

HIV organizations are planning another Call-In Day for Monday, July 24th on the HIV Hotline to express opposition to the bill. The hotline number is 1-866-246-9371 and the message is simple: "Vote No on the BCRA!" We urge people in all states to call. We also ask that you reach out to friends and family in states with Senators that have expressed concern or opposition to the bill. The list of states, which has been growing, is: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas; Alaska, Colorado, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Ohio, Nevada, South Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Please mark your calendars and call in on Monday!! Keep calling!! Get your constituents, colleagues, friends, families, or anyone you can reach to use the HIV Hotline and participate in the National Call-In Day on July 24th. It’s easy!

1. Call 1 (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

---

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/zombie-health-care-bill-refuses-die