

FRIDAY ALERT



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ALERT – ACTION NEEDED TO SAVE HEALTH CARE NOW

Trump Supports Latest Senate Effort to Repeal Obamacare – It Could Pass in 10 Days

President **Trump** said that he hopes the Graham-Cassidy bill, unveiled on Wednesday as the new way to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA), will address the “Obamacare crisis.”

Introduced by Sens. **Bill Cassidy** (R-LA) and **Lindsey Graham** (R-SC), the bill would repeal the health care law’s tax credits for middle-income Americans, cost-sharing reduction subsidies for low-income Americans, and the Medicaid expansion in 2020. It would also end Medicaid as we know it, changing the program to a block grant to states and eliminating coverage for vulnerable and poor citizens.

Sen. **John McCain** (R-AZ), who cast the deciding vote against the repeal and replace effort in July, appears to favor this bill. On Wednesday McCain told reporters he supports the measure, despite his passionate call for the regular order of committee hearings, open debate and amendments from both sides of the aisle. “If it’s not through regular order then it’s a mistake, but it doesn’t mean I wouldn’t vote for it,” he said.

The complex formula used to divide federal health care funds would tilt toward sparsely populated states. Rural states that have fewer people per square mile would fare better than those with denser, more urban populations. A state like California would be dramatically disadvantaged, as it would see some of its Medicaid expansion funds sent elsewhere.

“The Cassidy-Graham legislation is a wolf in sheep’s clothing, said **Robert Roach, Jr.**, President of the Alliance. “It cuts Medicaid funding dramatically and will lead to rationed care. Health care protections currently guaranteed by the Affordable Care Act would fall by the wayside.”

Call Your Senator Today to Stop Cassidy-Graham Health Care Repeal Bill!

With the U.S. Senate set to vote on the Cassidy-Graham bill the week of September 25th, the time to call your Senators is now. Dial 866-828-4162 and say:

- Vote NO on the Graham-Cassidy bill.
- It decimates Medicaid. The result would be as many as 20 million fewer people having insurance. Many of those would be older Americans.

Please call every day until the bill has been stopped.



Sen. Bill Cassidy (left) and Sen. Lindsey Graham congratulated each other during a news conference Wednesday after unveiling a bill to repeal Obamacare. Sen. Dean Heller (R-NV, center) and Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI, right) are on either side of Sen. Graham.

Trump Also Using Rule Changes to Gut Health Care

While Congress makes another effort to repeal the ACA, the Trump administration is quietly [pressing ahead](#) with plans to gut major **Obama**-era rules and relax federal oversight of key parts of the health care industry.

Top Administration officials have indicated that they will reverse a rule blocking nursing homes from forcing residents to sign away their right to sue nursing home operators, forcing seniors or their families to go through arbitration rather than the courts. They have also signaled their intention to end mandatory programs making hospitals more accountable for their patients' health and slowed the system's transition to one that pays doctors based on quality rather than quantity.

Aftermath of Hurricane Irma Renews Focus on Safety of Nursing Home Residents

The Washington Post [reported](#) Saturday that the stress of hurricane evacuations can lead to dozens of deaths among seniors who were hastily relocated. A [2011 study](#) that found that of more than 36,000 nursing home residents who experienced a hurricane since Katrina in 2005, there was a cumulative total of 579 extra deaths and 544 extra hospitalizations within 90 days compared to any similar period during two years preceding the storms.

The stress of evacuations is not the only cause of death for seniors in a hurricane's path. Four days after the *Post* article was published, eight Hollywood, Florida nursing home residents [died](#) in a building left without air conditioning after Irma struck Southern Florida. Because the residents were not moved to a hospital within close proximity of their residence despite stifling

temperatures, Hollywood police have begun a criminal investigation into their deaths. There are also reports that the nursing home managers knew that its backup power generator was faulty.

“The case in Hollywood is especially troubling because the residents’ safety appeared to be so obviously at risk, given the drastic conditions,” said **Joseph Peters, Jr.**, Secretary-Treasurer of the Alliance. “Our country must continue to improve our efforts to make the safety of nursing home residents a high priority.”

Uninsured Rate Falls to Record Low 8.8%

Three years after the Affordable Care Act’s coverage expansion, the number of Americans without health insurance fell to 28.1 million, down from 29 million in 2015, according to a federal report released Tuesday.

The latest numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau showed the nation’s uninsured rate dropped to [8.8 percent](#). It had been 9.1 percent in 2015. Both the overall number of uninsured and the percentage are record lows. Many of the gains were due to the ACA. Other advances were due to Americans qualifying for Medicare as they turned 65.

“The Affordable Care Act expanded Medicaid, providing coverage to many lower-income Americans. It also provided subsidies to help lower- and middle-income Americans buy coverage in the marketplace,” said **Richard Fiesta**, Executive Director of the Alliance. “Further attempts to repeal and replace Obamacare as this data stares us in the face defies all logic.”