

PROTECT OUR CARE

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Leslie Dach and Brad Woodhouse, Protect Our Care

DATE: February 24, 2023

RE: Republican Threats to Health Care Are as Real as Ever

Over the last several weeks, news reports have indicated that Republicans are pursuing draconian cuts to American health care. [Dating back](#) to before the election, Republicans have made it crystal clear that they want to use their House majority to gut vital health care programs rather than make the wealthy and big corporations pay their fair share. This includes slashing trillions of dollars from Medicaid and the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Republican lawmakers have been working with President Trump's former Office of Management and Budget Chief, Russ Vought, to draft a budget as they threaten to default on the nation's debt and tank the economy if President Biden doesn't agree to gut vital health care programs.

Vought currently leads an influential think tank known as the Center for Renewing America where he has "quietly emerged as an intellectual leader of the GOP's conservative flank," according to the [Washington Post](#). Vought is in close contact with Republicans on Capitol Hill, briefing members of Congress at least three times about his budget plan and speaking to key lawmakers and staffers "at least once a week."

[Vought's plan](#) would cut \$2 trillion from Medicaid alone, disproportionately impacting children, rural Americans, and people of color. Vought is also advocating for \$600 billion in cuts to the ACA, which would rip coverage from 20 million Americans and raise premiums for nearly 15 million more.

This is just the latest in a long line of [Republican attacks](#) on health care. The GOP is using every tool at their disposal to rip away protections for pre-existing conditions, raise premiums, and throw millions off their coverage. Rick Scott's plan would sunset every federal program every five years, threatening the ACA in its entirety. Republican lawmakers and advocates have repeatedly supported lawsuits seeking to dismantle the ACA's core protections, including free preventive services relied on by more than 160 million Americans. Most recently, Republicans have vowed to repeal the enhanced premium tax credits under the Inflation Reduction Act, which are saving families thousands of dollars per year on health care.

Republicans also want to throw a bone to Big Pharma and reverse recent gains to make prescription drugs more affordable for millions of Americans. They have vowed to stop Medicare negotiation, raise seniors' drug costs, and repeal all of the Inflation Reduction Act's drug savings. Republicans also continue to block Medicaid expansion in 11 states, preventing [2.2 million](#) Americans from gaining affordable coverage.

The bottom line is that the GOP plan would raise health care costs for nearly every household across the country and rip away the basic benefits that are a lifeline for millions of seniors and working families.

PROTECT OUR CARE

A closer look at what's on the chopping block under the Vought plan:

Premium Tax Credits. The Vought budget would fully repeal the ACA's tax credits that help millions of Americans afford quality health insurance. A record [16.3 million](#) Americans signed up for coverage through the ACA marketplace this year, and with 80 percent of enrollees eligible for tax credits, over 15 million people could see their premiums soar if the Vought plan were enacted.

Medicaid Expansion. The Vought budget "repeals the authorizations created by Obamacare that permit states to expand their Medicaid programs." The ACA's expansion of Medicaid covers [more than 21 million](#) people who would have their care ripped away if Republicans were to enact this plan.

Protections For More Than 135 Million Americans With Pre-Existing Conditions.

Vought's plan lambastes the Affordable Care Act for providing "some subsidies to some people, only if they choose to purchase insurance the government defines in the way the government demands." Removing the consumer protections enacted by the ACA would put insurance companies back in charge of your care and end protections for [54 million](#) Americans with 'declinable' pre-existing conditions.

More on GOP plans to rip away health care:

Priority #1: Repeal The Inflation Reduction Act. The GOP has made [repealing](#) the Inflation Reduction Act a [top priority](#). U.S. Representative Andy Ogles (R-TN-05) recently [introduced](#) legislation to fully repeal the Inflation Reduction Act. Backed by major conservative groups including Heritage Action and Americans for Prosperity, the GOP plan would raise premiums, ban Medicare from negotiating drug prices, reverse recent coverage gains, exacerbate health inequities, and hike prescription drug costs for seniors. Key members of the House and Senate, including [Rep. Buddy Carter](#) and [Sens. Lankford, Lee, Lummis, and Rubio](#) have also indicated that repealing the drug negotiation provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act is a major priority.

Rick Scott's Plan For America Would "Sunset" The Affordable Care Act, Medicare, and Medicaid. One year ago today, as chair of the NRSC, Senator Scott proposed an [11-point Republican plan](#) that would sunset *all* federal legislation in five years. Not only would the Rick Scott plan put the Affordable Care Act in grave danger, but it threatens *every* federal health program, including Medicare and Medicaid. When asked about the ACA's protections for people with pre-existing conditions, Scott [stated](#), "I don't believe in grand bargains...We've got to reward people for caring for themselves." As Governor of Florida, Rick Scott refused Medicaid expansion that would cover [833,000](#) Floridians and attempted to make it more [difficult](#) for Floridians to sign up for Medicaid, suggesting a reduction in the amount of time individuals have to enroll

PROTECT OUR CARE

from 90 to 30 days. Scott wasn't acting alone in his support for this radical plan. Many high-profile Republicans signaled their support, including [Senator Ron Johnson](#), [RNC Chairwoman Rona McDaniel](#), [Senator Mike Braun](#), [Senator Marco Rubio](#), [Senator Tommy Tuberville](#), [Congressman Matt Gaetz](#), and [Senator Joni Ernst](#).

Ron Johnson Would Put Medicare And Social Security Up For Debate Every Year And Repeal The ACA. Ron Johnson has [complained](#) that Social Security and Medicare automatically grant benefits to those who meet the qualifications, and he would prefer to put your care up for debate in Congress every single year. “If you qualify for the entitlement, you just get it no matter what the cost,” Johnson said. Johnson suggested that Social Security and Medicare be transformed into programs whose budgets are appropriated by Congress on an annual basis, putting care for millions of Americans at risk every year. “What we ought to be doing is we ought to turn everything into discretionary spending so it's all evaluated so that we can fix problems or fix programs that are broken, that are going to be going bankrupt.” Johnson has also [committed](#) to continuing to work to repeal the entire Affordable Care Act, stripping health care from millions, if Republicans regain full control of Congress.