Affordable Care Act, Hey Hey Hey Goodbye . . . What The House Cravenly Proposes To Demolish

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Michael J. Matheron, May 5, 2017
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"The pursuit of peace and progress cannot end in a few years in either victory or defeat.
The pursuit of peace and progress, with its trials and its errors, its successes and its setbacks, can never be relaxed and never abandoned."

-Dag Hammarskjold, 29 July 1905 – 18 September 1961
Nobel Peace Prize 1961
[posthumous acceptance speech by Rolf Edberg*, Swedish Ambassador to Norway]
2nd Secretary-General of the United Nations
Died in airplane crash en route to negotiate a cease-fire between
"non-combatant" UN forces and Moise Tshombe's Katangese troops.

Hammarskjold's final writing still holds true today. We're losing long-fought battles we'd (foolishly, I suppose) believed were in the rear view mirror. Voting suppression abounds; discrimination rises again; firearms appear to be now the only truly unassailable right we possess; women are again under a renewed and ever more spiteful and dangerous attack, physically and

politically; and our Pr~sident would have to improve his ways to be considered eligible for parole in a Turkish prison.

And *today*, except for 20 of their most nearly sane members, House Republicans brewed up their half-baked, half-assed repeal of the best of the ACA only to craft a health bill more reminiscent of the German Nuremberg laws of 1933, the GOP finally achieved "greatness" in malice and infamy and human and economic frugality that might have caused Ayn Rand herself to scream, *"Enough!"*

Remember, just three and a half years ago . . . on September 26, 2013, President Obama spoke about the Affordable Care Act to a group at Prince George's County Community College in Largo, Maryland. Signed into law on March 23, 2010, the President was in an interesting mood, happily basking in a major legislative achievement, yet dismayed by continuous, often demonic, GOP resistance:

> THE PRESIDENT:]They have made such a big political issue out of this, trying to scare everybody with lies about "death panels" and "killing granny" — — right? "Armageddon." So if it actually works, they'll look pretty bad. If it actually works, that will mean that everything they were saying really wasn't true and they were just playing politics.
>
> Just the other day, one Republican in Congress said we need to shut this thing down before the marketplaces open and people get to see that they'll be getting coverage and getting these subsidies because — and I'm going to quote him here — he said, "It's going to prove almost impossible to undo Obamacare." Right? So in other words, we've got to shut this thing down before people find out that they like it. That's a strange argument. Don't you think that's a strange argument?
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> And the closer we get, the more desperate they get. I mean, over the last few weeks the rhetoric has just been cranked up to a place I've never seen before. One congressman said that Obamacare is "the most dangerous piece of legislation ever passed." Ever. In the history of America, this is the most dangerous piece of legislation. Creating a marketplace so people can buy group insurance plans — the most dangerous ever.
>
> You had a state representative somewhere say that it's "as destructive to personal and individual liberty as the Fugitive Slave Act." Think about that. Affordable health care is worse than a law that let slave owners get their runaway slaves back. I mean, these are quotes. I'm not making this stuff up. And here's one more that I've heard — I like this one — we have to — and I'm quoting here — "We have to repeal this failure before it literally kills women, kills children, kills senior citizens." Now, I have to say — that one was from six months ago — I just want to point out we still have women, we still have

children, we still have senior citizens.

All this would be funny if it wasn't so crazy. . . [for complete speech]|

The phrase, "[a]ll this would be funny if it wasn't so crazy," was true, of course, the crazy. Yet, Sean Combs is right "It's okay to be crazy, but don't be insane." The GOP, nearly *en masse* voted today to repeal the Affordable Care Act. an should the Senate, in some contagious mass hysteria, pass it with no meaningful changes, then the Republican party and Donald Trump have gone around the bend, beyond the moral pale, and with hearts of granite. They're just being themselves. We've seen this coming since last November 8th.

[caption id="attachment_11332" align="alignleft" width="260"]

"Something's happenin' here, what it is ain't exactly clear' Yet . . . .[/caption]

Now's the time to lower the joke-level (a challenge for me) and, if the House GOP'S Abominable Health Care Act (AHCA) passes the Senate, and Trump signs it,to instead begin to parade beyond marches, and prepare for mass protests, national strikes, and civil disobedience.

As de Tocqueville warned the uninterested and unbelieving French Chamber of Deputies in January 1848:

"We are sleeping on a volcano… A wind of revolution blows, the storm is on the horizon."

Just a few weeks later revolution in France (and in Europe, generally) broke out. By November 4, 1848, the Second Republic of France is in place. Are we not sleeping on a volcano? Are our governments' agents, unaware of the rumbling? When shall we awaken them?

The song below greeted the House GOP after they succeeded, by a hair's breadth, to begin the demolishing of affordable, available, and economically viable health insurance for all Americans. The version below from 2000's *Remember the Titans* has, for those who may be shorn of all

necessary and proper health care by the end of this year, has a funereal setting. Like today's.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hl2iENBbn1s?start=47&end=92

Secretary-General Hammarskjold's completed writing the words at the outset of this post on the flight that carried him and his group of peacemakers to their deaths. Peace seekers die in suspicious circumstances. Health care "peacemakers" figuratively die when their profound achievement, the ACA, crashes and burns with detritus and small intact pieces that somehow survive. I now believe that the GOP's successful attack on health care is a true *casus belli*, a true cause for war, especially because thousands and thousands of vulnerable people will, indeed, die thanks to the GOP and their regular supporters and constituents (who, as is well-known, will suffer the loss of their hated "Obamacare"). We must restore the ACA, and extend its coverage to all Americans. Medicare For All. In the end, we will have to take (perhaps literally) most of the needed financing to do so primarily from the wealthy upper 10%; they'll still have their 5o-foot long water toys and houses that have 16 toilets. In truth, they won't feel it an iota. But, be ready, they *will* complain that they do. We'll need to begin their re-education program asap . . .

Below are very helpful resources that will address a panoply of questions.

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation

Kaiser Family Foundation's Kaiser Health News **is an excellent resource to follow many subject areas, provides an exceptional resource summing up what the GOP has wrought.**

Plans available for comparison:

- The American Health Care Act, as passed by the House of Representatives on May 4,

2017 (PDF)
- The Affordable Care Act, 2010 (PDF)

More plans for comparison:

- Rep. Tom Price's Empowering Patients First Act, 2015 (PDF)
- House Speaker Paul Ryan's A Better Way: Our Vision for a More Confident America, 2016 (PDF)
- Sen. Bill Cassidy's Patient Freedom Act, 2017 (PDF)
- Sen. Rand Paul's Obamacare Replacement Act, 2017 (PDF)
- House Discussion Draft, February 10, 2017 (PDF)

You many also be interested in...

- MAP: Premiums and Tax Credits Under the ACA vs. the AHCA
- COLUMN: Why Deductibles Would Rise Under the GOP Health Plan
- BRIEF: What's at Stake for Health and Health Care Disparities under the ACA Repeal?

Current Issues

How has the Affordable Care Act impacted the U.S. health care system?

- An Estimated 52 Million Adults Have Pre-Existing Conditions that Would Make Them Uninsurable Pre-Obamacare
- 2017 Premium Changes and Insurer Participation in ACA Marketplaces Health

Center for American Progress

The Upton Amendment to the ACA Repeal Bill Will Have Almost No Effect

A deal with moderate House Republicans would provide subsidies for just 76,000 more people with pre-existing conditions.

By Emily Gee and Topher Spiro

COLUMN

Cuts to Medicaid Would Harm Young Children with Disabilities

Capping federal funding for Medicaid would make it harder for children with disabilities and their families to access the supports and services they need to thrive.

By Rebecca Ullrich

ISSUE BRIEF

House Health Care Plan Is Not Enough to Keep High-Risk Pools Afloat

The Affordable Care Act repeal bill fails consumers with pre-existing conditions and falls $200

billion short.

By Emily Gee

COLUMN

[The Big Lie that Conservative Policies Are Good for Small Business]

This column busts five myths about how business regulation, tax giveaways, competition, and the Affordable Care Act affect small businesses.

By Kate Bahn and Regina Willensky

COLUMN

[The Trump Uncertainty Rate Hike]

Uncertainty created by the President and Congress could raise 2018 premiums by hundreds of dollars.

By Sam Berger and Emily Gee

COLUMN

[100 Days, 100 Ways the Trump Administration Is Harming Women and Families]

It has only been 100 days since President Trump took office, and millions of American women and families are already feeling the adverse impacts of his administration's misguided agenda.

By Sunny Frothingham and Shilpa Phadke

ISSUE BRIEF

[Premium Increases for Pre-Existing Conditions Under Latest ACA Repeal Plan, by State]

People with serious health conditions would pay tens of thousands of dollars more for coverage if the Affordable Care Act were repealed.

By Sam Berger and Emily Gee

COLUMN

Latest ACA Repeal Plan Would Explode Premiums for People with Pre-Existing Conditions

Even after adding a new risk pool, enrollees would face thousands of dollars in increased costs.

By Sam Berger and Emily Gee

COLUMN

Trump’s New Plan to Penalize the Sick

New White House proposal would gut protections for pre-existing conditions.

By Sam Berger

COLUMN

Number of Americans with Pre-Existing Conditions by Congressional District

The White House proposal would eviscerate protections against discrimination based on medical history for tens of millions nationwide.

By Emily Gee

COLUMN

New Data Deliver Good News for Health Care and Bad News for Speaker Ryan's Tax Reform Plan

Projected federal health care spending has declined since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, and failing to repeal the law presents a major hurdle for House Speaker Ryan's tax reform plan.

By Harry Stein and Alex Rowell

COLUMN

class="entry-title ">Proposed Cuts to Medicaid Could Mean Big Cuts to School-Based Health Services

Cuts to Medicaid included in the American Health Care Act could be devastating to schools, which rely on Medicaid funding to provide critical health services to students.

By Lisette Partelow and Kami Spicklemire

COLUMN

Stop Playing Politics with People's Lives

We need a health care system that delivers care with compassion and guards the right to affordable, effective health care.

By Taison Bell

COLUMN

Older Americans Would Pay $8,510 More for Care Despite Promised Reserve Fund

Republican House leadership acknowledges that the AHCA will make premiums unaffordable for

older Americans but isn’t committing to a real solution.

By Emily Gee

COLUMN

[3 Things to Know About How the Republican Health Care Plan Would Affect Young Children]

The American Health Care Act would result in less access to critical health care services for young children.

By Jessica Troe and Rebecca Ullrich

COLUMN