

KEY VOTE ALERT!

June 27, 2017

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. SENATE:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports the Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017 (BCRA). The Chamber will consider including votes on, or in relation to, this bill—including votes on the Motion to Proceed—in our annual How They Voted scorecard.

The Chamber has long been committed to preserving and improving the employer-sponsored health care system while also ensuring that those outside the employer-based system have access to multiple, affordable options for coverage.

While the employer-sponsored system continues to grow and innovate, other insurance markets are deteriorating under the burdensome costs and requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). In particular, the individual insurance markets are on the verge of collapse, premiums are skyrocketing, and, in many parts of the country, patient choice is dwindling or disappearing altogether.

Senate passage of BCRA is a crucial step in the process to reform these failing markets. It will provide millions of Americans outside of the employer-based system with more options for coverage at lower costs.

Further, the bill includes the following key provisions, which the Chamber strongly supports:

- The BCRA will repeal the most egregious taxes and mandates of the ACA, which will help lower the cost of health care coverage and allow employers to create jobs. The bill repeals the medical device tax that unfairly penalizes American manufacturers, and zeros out the employer mandate penalties.
- The bill would help stabilize the fragile individual insurance markets by infusing states with more funding and empowering them with greater flexibility. In addition to providing critical funding for the Cost Sharing Reduction program for two years, the bill provides significant funding over multiple years explicitly for states to utilize to best serve their individual market and help their consumers. This “laboratory-of-democracy” approach offers the best opportunity to bring down premiums, promote consumer choice, and reduce patients’ out-of-pocket costs.



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- Finally, the bill would help preserve the employer-sponsored health care system that 177 million Americans depend on for quality coverage. It eases limitations and restrictions on tax preferred accounts funded by employers and individuals to help pay for health care services and items. It also allows employers to offer greater variation in benefits to employees.

While the Chamber recognizes that further improvements can—and must—be made, passage of this legislation is vital to restoring choice, flexibility, and innovation to America's health care markets and growth to our economy.

The Chamber looks forward to working with Congress, the Administration, and other stakeholders to make progress on these and other badly needed health care reform priorities. Beyond the essential policy changes that this legislation would advance, this bill must also be passed so Congress can move on to other national priorities, including tax reform and infrastructure proposals.

We urge you to vote for the Better Care Reconciliation Act and help significantly improve health care in America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jack Howard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Jack Howard
Senior Vice President
Congressional and Public Affairs