GOP Health Care Bill Is a Betrayal of President Trump

It was inevitable that this would happen, but we figured it would take a little longer.

Speaker Paul Ryan's so-called Obamacare "repeal and replace" bill is a complete sellout of President Trump's campaign promise to rid the country and the economy of the disaster of Obamacare, but the President is already being suckered into endorsing it.

Indeed, President Trump's White House spokesman, Sean Spicer, falsely stated yesterday that the health care bill from House Speaker Paul Ryan represents what will eventually be a full repeal of Obamacare.

As our friend Matthew Boyle, writing for Breitbart, pointed-out, the bill is more like Obamacare 2.0 because it keeps in place the Obamacare requirements that insurers allow for coverage of preexisting conditions and allows children to stay on their parents' health care until they're 26 years old. It shifts the individual mandate from being a tax paid to the government to a penalty paid to insurance companies, does not even address the Medicaid issue in states effectively, helps illegal aliens access health care in the system and does not allow for purchasing of insurance across state lines as Republicans have promised for years—among many, many other problems.

And among those among many, many problems one of the most egregious aspects of the bill is the subsidy for illegal aliens that will be paid for by the hardworking American citizens who elected President Trump.

As our friend Katie McHugh, writing for Breitbart, documented, Ryan's bill actually strips out even Obamacare's weak protections preventing illegal aliens from signing up for health care meant for citizens.

Obamacare has no meaningful, robust protections in place against illegal aliens claiming health care. The law claimed to exclude illegals, but in practice, made no effort to verify that the people applying for health care were citizens. Now, Republicans are about to take that problem and make it much worse by gutting enforcement, noted our friend Daniel Horowitz.

Obamacare 2.0, Rinocare or Ryancare, whatever you call it—the bill is actually worse than Obamacare in many respects, and it is all being done behind closed doors using budget reconciliation, not open debate and amendments.

Republican Capitol Hill leaders are relying on budget reconciliation to repeal the Affordable Care Act because it requires only 51 Senate votes instead of the 60 needed to overcome a filibuster in the Senate. But this process has its limitations, and won't allow Republicans to make the law vanish, which is why conservatives see it as a mistake.

"Because of the Senate filibuster, the GOP Congress feels trapped into the flawed reconciliation process as the only vehicle to get rid of parts of Obamacare," Rick Manning, president of Americans for Limited Government, told the *Washington Examiner* Friday. "But reconciliation does not allow for a full repeal of Obamacare, and the inevitable outcome will be more federal regulation with minimum coverage standards imposed on states that will once again be robbed of decision-making, driving health care costs upward for Americans."

Setting aside the illegal alien subsidies, the key problem with the draft House health care bill is that it fails to correct the features of Obamacare that drove up health insurance costs, observed Edmund Haislmaier of the Heritage Foundation.

Instead, it mainly tweaks Obamacare’s financing and subsidy structure.

Rather than repeal and replace Obamacare, the bill focuses on protecting those who gained subsidized coverage through the law’s exchange subsidies and Medicaid expansion, while failing to correct Obamacare’s misguided insurance regulations that drove up premiums for Americans buying coverage without government subsidies.

Haislmaier says about 22 million individuals currently receive subsidized health coverage through the exchanges (8 million) and the Medicaid expansion (14 million). For them, Obamacare’s higher insurance costs are offset by the law’s subsidies.

However, that is not the case for another group of about 25 million Americans with unsubsidized individual-market coverage (10 million people) or small-employer plans (at least another 15 million people).

Those 25 million are the ones who most need relief from Obamacare and have the strongest motivation to politically support repeal and replace. Haislmaier points out that their real-life experience of Obamacare has basically been “all pain, no gain,” as they have been subjected to significant premium increases and coverage dislocations with no offsetting subsidies.

Unfortunately, the draft House bill provides no meaningful relief for that group that is most adversely affected by Obamacare and most supportive of repeal — and most likely to have voted for President Trump.

Instead, the draft bill leaves Obamacare’s costly insurance regulations in place, and attempts to offset those costs with even more subsidies. The draft bill’s new “Patient and State

Stability Fund" is particularly problematic. That program would provide grants to states of up to a total of $100 billion over the nine years 2018-2026– in essence substituting new Ryancare funding for old Obamacare funding.

What's the bottom line?

It is clear to us and to many other conservatives that Paul Ryan and the rest of the Capitol Hill Republican "leadership" never intended to repeal Obamacare—the many repeal votes while Obama was president were merely "show votes" taken to make it look as though establishment Republicans opposed what they actually support: benefits for illegal aliens, massive entitlements and more big government.

To stop Ryancare's benefits for illegal aliens, massive new entitlements and big government we urge conservatives to contact the White House to let President Trump know he's being suckered on this deal.

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