Here are the 6 Republicans Who Changed Their Minds About Obamacare

Americans learned the cold, hard truth Wednesday: some Republicans just don’t want to get rid of the Affordable Care Act.

Given the chance to vote for a bill very similar to one they all voted in favor of less than two years ago, six Republicans “switched” their votes to keep the health care law in place. The obvious big difference between December of 2015 and Wednesday: They had a GOP president who was ready, willing, and eager to sign a repeal of Obamacare into law.

Here are the six Republican “defectors” and what they had to say about their votes:

- **Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn.**, who is up for re-election in 2020—”I agree with President Trump that we should repeal and replace major parts of the Affordable Care Act at the same time. In 2015, we could have waited two years for relief, but we cannot now, when Tennessee insurance commissioner Julie McPeak says the state’s individual insurance market is ‘very near collapse.’ We have 350,000 Tennesseans who buy insurance in the individual market—songwriters, small businessmen and women, farmers—who are worried today that they may have zero options for insurance in just six months. In addition, I don’t think Tennesseans would be comfortable canceling insurance for 22 million Americans, and trusting Congress to find a replacement in two years. Pilots like to know where they’re going to land when they take off, and we should too.”
- **Shelley Moore Capito, R-W. Va.,** who is up for re-

election in 2020, gave no comment about her vote, but has previously said she did not want to cast a vote that would “harm” the people of her state.

- **Dean Heller, R-Nev.,** who is up for re-election in 2018, gave no comment about his vote, but had offered an amendment of his own to amend the American Health Care Act, which also failed.
- **John McCain. R-Ariz.,** who is up for re-election in 2022, gave no comment about his vote, but had previously said he did not support a repeal without replacement—despite voting for it in 2015—and has offered three amendments of his own to address concerns about Medicaid.
- **Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska,** who is up for re-election in 2022, gave no comment about her vote, but had previously said she wants to take the bill back to committee for “regular order” markup. She also voted Tuesday against the motion to proceed to debate on the American Health Care Act.
- **Rob Portman, R-Ohio**, who is up for re-election in 2022—”I have said consistently that I support repealing and replacing Obamacare, and I voted to do so last night. I’m not giving up on doing both of those things. Because we now have 19 counties in Ohio without a single health insurer and 27 with just one, repealing this law without any replacement would leave tens of thousands of Ohioans stranded without health insurance and everyone with higher costs. We need to roll up our sleeves and come up with a better health care system. Just kicking the can down the road adds more uncertainty to the failed status quo, and according to all the experts I talk to, that means higher premiums, higher deductibles and more insurance companies leaving Ohio. We need a rescue plan for Ohio families who are suffering under the status quo, not one that makes the health care system worse for Ohio families. I will continue to fight for a better health care system that lowers the cost of coverage and provides access to quality care, while

> protecting the most vulnerable in our society. I will continue to work with my colleagues on positive solutions that make our health care system work better for all Ohioans.”

Ahead of the vote on the repeal bill, which was delayed for nearly four hours, its author, Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., made an impassioned plea for the repeal of Obamacare. Click here to watch the speech. Ultimately, the bill failed on a 55-45 vote; Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, who has never voted for a repeal of the health care law, also voted “no.”

The Senate is now in a process of taking up individual senators’ amendments that will continue through the evening Thursday. Among the bills that may come up for a vote is a so-called “skinny repeal” bill, which would begin a brick-by-brick repeal of the health care law.

But time is running out. Insurers have only a few weeks to decide whether or not they will participate in the Obamacare individual marketplace for 2018.