

ADVISORY

FROM THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH

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Chairman Brady Announces Hearing on the Challenges of the Affordable Care Act

House Ways and Means Health Subcommittee Chairman Kevin Brady (R-TX) today announced that the Subcommittee on Health will hold a hearing on the status of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). This hearing will allow the Subcommittee to focus on the immediate and long-term challenges Americans face in finding affordable, quality health coverage as a result of the ACA. **The hearing will take place on Wednesday, December 4, 2013, in 1100 Longworth House Office Building, beginning at 10:00 A.M.**

In view of the limited time available to hear from witnesses, oral testimony at this hearing will be from invited witnesses only. However, any individual or organization not scheduled for an appearance may submit a written statement for consideration by the Committee and for inclusion in the printed record of the hearing.

BACKGROUND:

The American people are understandably concerned and focused on what the Obama Administration has called the “fumbled” rollout of the healthcare.gov system used to enroll American individuals and families into the federal health insurance Exchanges. The Administration has responded with a “tech surge” in an attempt to fix the consumer, security, verification, billing and payment flaws plaguing the healthcare.gov website. However, the ACA is more than a web site and many of the law’s major provisions, which are scheduled to go into effect in just under a month, will both impact the ability of individual Americans to maintain health care they can afford and access to their current doctors.

Millions of Americans have received notices from their insurers informing them that because of the ACA their current plan is being cancelled, and they must now find a new health plan. Americans are also discovering that the premiums offered in the Exchanges are higher than the Administration originally promised and for many, more expensive than their current plans. Employers are increasing out of pocket costs, dropping spousal

coverage and reducing hours for their workers. Enrollment in the new Exchanges has fallen well below the Administration's projections and many analysts have expressed concern that the young and healthy will not sign up in sufficient numbers to prevent premium spikes in 2015. Additionally, serious concerns also remain that the healthcare.gov system is incapable of securely handling an expected surge in volume in December while accurately verifying eligibility and fulfilling the necessary steps to carry out billing and payment functions.

The hearing will examine and analyze the impact of the ACA on the health care system and explore ways to mitigate the adverse impacts of the law on the American people.

In announcing the hearing, Chairman Brady stated, **“We are no longer debating what will happen when the President’s health care law goes into effect. The Affordable Care Act, as it was written and is being implemented, is having the negative consequences on the American people we long predicted it would. Despite the President’s many promises to the contrary, they are being forced to find a new and more expensive plan because the plan they have and like has been canceled. Individuals are being forced to buy coverage from a website that does not work. This is unfair to the American people. But let’s be honest – the problems we are seeing today are likely to get even worse. Some people will face a gap in coverage, premiums will likely spike even higher in 2015, and more and more people with employer-provided coverage will be adversely affected by the law. This hearing provides all of us an opportunity to get a better perspective on these challenges so that we can facilitate solutions to mitigate some of this pain.”**

FOCUS OF THE HEARING:

The hearing will focus on the challenges of the ACA on the health care system and explore ways to mitigate the adverse impacts of the law on the American people .

DETAILS FOR SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS:

Please Note: Any person(s) and/or organization(s) wishing to submit for the hearing record must follow the appropriate link on the hearing page of the Committee website and complete the informational forms. From the Committee homepage, <http://waysandmeans.house.gov>, select “Hearings.” Select the hearing for which you would like to submit, and click on the link entitled, “Click here to provide a submission for the record.” Once you have followed the online instructions, submit all requested information. ATTACH your submission as a Word document, in compliance with the formatting requirements listed below, **by the close of business on Wednesday, December 18, 2013**. Finally, please note that due to the change in House mail policy, the U.S. Capitol Police will refuse sealed-package deliveries to all House Office Buildings. For questions, or if you encounter technical problems, please call (202) 225-1721 or (202) 225-3625.

FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS:

The Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record. As always, submissions will be included in the record according to the discretion of the Committee. The Committee will not alter the content of your submission, but we reserve the right to format it according to our guidelines. Any submission provided to the Committee by a witness, any supplementary materials submitted for the printed record, and any written comments in response to a request for written comments must conform to the guidelines listed below. Any submission or supplementary item not in compliance with these guidelines will not be printed, but will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.

1. All submissions and supplementary materials must be provided in Word format and MUST NOT exceed a total of 10 pages, including attachments. Witnesses and submitters are advised that the Committee relies on electronic submissions for printing the official hearing record.
2. Copies of whole documents submitted as exhibit material will not be accepted for printing. Instead, exhibit material should be referenced and quoted or paraphrased. All exhibit material not meeting these specifications will be maintained in the Committee files for review and use by the Committee.
3. All submissions must include a list of all clients, persons and/or organizations on whose behalf the witness appears. A supplemental sheet must accompany each submission listing the name, company, address, telephone, and fax numbers of each witness.

The Committee seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202-225-1721 or 202-226-3411 TTD/TTY in advance of the event (four business days notice is requested). Questions with regard to special accommodation needs in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats) may be directed to the Committee as noted above.

Note: All Committee advisories and news releases are available on the World Wide Web at <http://www.waysandmeans.house.gov/>.