



March 3, 2017

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chair
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

the Honorable Kevin Brady
Chair
Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
Ways and Means Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Walden and Brady, Ranking Members Pallone and Neal:

Representing the interests of our nation's more than 3.6 million registered nurses, the American Nurses Association (ANA) respectfully calls on Congress to commit to a thoughtful, public process for any proposed changes to the current health care law.

Nurses provide expert, compassionate care for people through all stages of life and work in every health care setting. Careful consideration must be given to any legislative proposal that would fundamentally alter healthcare delivery and impact patients, and providers. We are especially concerned about changes that would roll back Medicaid expansion and move the program to a block grant funding model, as well as Medicare changes that would shift the out of pocket spending burden to limited income seniors who depend on the program for their basic and often costly healthcare needs.

While ANA values and supports the economic use of health care resources, we believe that some of the key changes proposed to the current health law could restrict millions of people from accessing healthcare services they critically need. Seniors and children are among our nation's most vulnerable citizens whose care could be disrupted. Millions of working adults could also face healthcare coverage losses if changes are made to the employer-based insurance market most Americans currently count on.

Typically, we have relied on the testimony of non-partisan experts, like the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), Medicaid and CHIP Payment and Access Commission (MACPAC), the Medicare Payment Advisory Committee (MedPAC) or the Government Accountability Office (GAO), to provide thoughtful analysis prior to consideration. ANA strongly urges Congress to keep with tradition and avoid departing from regular order in the face of such complicated policy changes.

The committees of jurisdiction, House Energy & Commerce Committee and Ways & Means Committee, have a longstanding commitment to transparency that relies on engaging the public through hearings, open comment periods on discussion drafts, multi-stakeholder meetings and more ahead of any legislative mark up.

As the nation's largest group of health care professionals and the nation's most trusted profession, ANA is strongly urging you to continue the traditions that are hallmarks of your committees' work and our nation's legislative process.

Sincerely,
Michelle Artz
Director of Government Affairs
American Nurses Association

cc: The Honorable Speaker Paul Ryan
The Honorable Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
The Honorable Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
The Honorable Minority Leader Charles Schumer
The Honorable Lamar Alexander
 Chair, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
The Honorable Patty Murray
 Ranking Member, Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee
The Honorable Orrin Hatch
 Chair, Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Ron Wyden
 Ranking Member, Senate Finance Committee