



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN®

March 3, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman, House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Greg Walden
Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Representatives Brady and Walden,

On behalf of the Human Rights Campaign's 2 million members and supporters nationwide I write to express our serious concerns regarding the substance and process of your plan to repeal the Affordable Care Act. As the nation's largest civil rights organization working to promote equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people we know the profound, personal impact this law has had on those most vulnerable to discrimination and healthcare disparities. This is a law that impacts all Americans and we all have a stake in the outcome of the discussions you are currently having behind closed doors. We urge you to postpone any markup of ACA legislation and schedule a full and open hearing and drafting process.

As members of Congress you have willingly undertaken the duty to serve your constituents and to represent them and their needs in Washington. You have the privilege of speaking for millions of Americans every day. However, in order for you to truly speak *for* the people, you must first speak *with* the people. The development of major legislation, like the Affordable Care Act, is informed and enriched by the public dialogue that results from a transparent and robust drafting process. It is essential that the text of the draft legislation designed to repeal this critical legislation be made publicly available. Further, we urge you to fully embrace a transparent process in good faith by holding a full and complete series of Congressional hearings to explore the impacts of your proposed changes.

The broad impact of this law is far from secret, therefore the process for repeal or revision should not be either. Health care impacts nearly 20% of the U.S. economy. More than 70 million

Americans are covered by Medicaid. For the LGBTQ community, the Affordable Care Act, has played a critical role in closing the gap on stark health disparities that have plagued our community for too long. It has made accessing comprehensive insurance coverage a reality for millions of Americans – many of them LGBTQ— for the first time. The guarantee issue requirements and lifting of the lifetime caps on coverage are critical for people living with chronic conditions like HIV. Additionally, people living with HIV do not have to have their health deteriorate, and become disabled to obtain coverage thanks to the Medicaid expansion. This law has made it possible that everyone regardless of who they are or who they love has access to the care they need.

The current process regarding the repeal and revision of the Affordable Care Act is anti-democratic and unsustainable. The American people, as well as the diverse stakeholders involved in ensuring quality, affordable health care, have a right to see the proposed legislation, provide feedback and talk with their Members of Congress about any and all substantive issues that affect their very lives raised by the draft. We urge you to engage in a robust and transparent debate rather than rushing a markup on this legislation no one has seen.

Sincerely,



Chad Griffin
President