

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 23, 2018

Dear Colleague,

As we prepare to head back to our districts, it is becoming increasingly clear that the deliberate actions of the Trump Administration and our Republican colleagues in Congress to undermine the *Affordable Care Act* are hurting hardworking families across the country. On average health insurance premiums are expected to rise 15 percent, with some states proposing increases well above 20 percent. That is hundreds of dollars out of the pockets of middle class Americans, which could have been avoided.

Access to affordable health care is a right, not a privilege. The ACA has been a lifeline to many, yet too many people have been left out or left behind by premiums or deductibles they cannot afford due to direct actions from the Administration. For years, we have sought ways to work with Republicans to fix what is not working and strengthen the ACA. Last July the New Democrat Coalition put forth the first Democratic proposal to stabilize the ACA and promote universal access to health care. That effort served as the spark for additional bipartisan efforts that were introduced in the House and Senate. We have continued to encourage timely bipartisan action, but time and again the actions of our colleagues make us question their commitment to join these efforts. Just in the past year Congressional Republicans and the Trump administration have:

- Attempted to repeal the ACA
- Slashed outreach and enrollment funding
- Cut the enrollment period in half and shut down healthcare.gov on Sundays
- Used official resources to promote anti-ACA publicity videos and marketing materials
- Stopped making cost-sharing reduction (CSR) payments to lower out-of-pocket costs for low income individuals
- Eliminated the individual mandate
- Proposed rules to expand plans that exclude coverage of essential health benefits and charge more based on age, gender and health status
- Pushed the courts to allow insurers to deny coverage and charge more for people with pre-existing conditions
- Stopped making risk adjustment payments that help offset the costs of covering people with chronic diseases and high health costs
- Encouraged enrollment navigators to promote limited coverage options

The collective toll of these actions has directly and indirectly impeded access to affordable health care for those who need it most. There are steps we could take right now to build on the progress the ACA has made, lower costs, and expand coverage.

It is clear that responsible action to provide needed stability will require Democratic leadership, and fundamental to any of those efforts will be H.R. 5155, *The Undo Sabotage and Expand*

Affordability of Health Insurance Act, from Ranking Members Frank Pallone, Richard Neal, and Bobby Scott. This bill will make health insurance more affordable, undo the damage done by the Trump administration, and provide the necessary investments to innovate and expand coverage to millions of Americans as we work toward universal coverage, building off the *Affordable Care Act*. This bill includes many of the policies the New Democrat Coalition Health Care Task Force proposed last year, and we look forward to continuing to work with our Ranking Members to craft thoughtful legislation.

We believe this is our best path forward and urge you to join us in cosponsoring H.R. 5155 to reaffirm your commitment to prioritizing efforts that can bring real relief to American families.

Sincerely,



Rep. Ami Bera
Healthcare Task Force Co-Chair
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Ann McLane Kuster
Healthcare Task Force Co-Chair
New Democrat Coalition

Rep. Kurt Schrader
Healthcare Task Force Co-Chair
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Rep. Jim Himes
Chair
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Rep. Suzan DelBene
Vice-Chair
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Derek Kilmer
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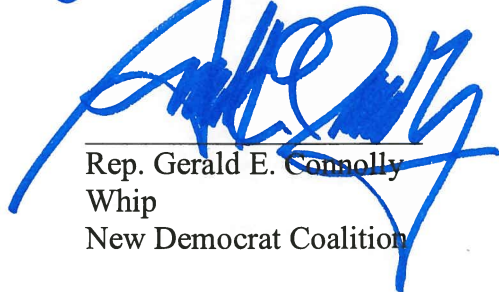
Rep. Jared Polis
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New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Terri Sewell
Vice-Chair
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Rep. Ron Kind
Chair Emeritus
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Rep. Gerald E. Connolly
Whip
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Scott Peters
Leadership Member
New Democrat Coalition



Rep. Kathleen Rice
Leadership Member
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