

Affordable Care Act Repeal Would be a Disaster for Maine

ACA Repeal Facts and Figures

95,000

Mainers lose health insurance

19,000 and 41,000

Parents and children lose health insurance

19,000

Mainers with mental health or substance abuse disorders lose health insurance

\$390 million

Lost federal premium subsidies in 2019

\$342

Average Mainers' monthly ACA tax credit

\$103

Average monthly Marketplace premium after ACA tax credits

One in Three

Mainers in the ACA Marketplace over age 55

\$475 million

Additional uncompensated care costs borne by Maine hospitals

75%

Percent of Americans that oppose immediate repeal

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides tens of thousands of Mainers with affordable health care for the first time. Repeal of the ACA would plunge young adults, older Mainers, and those living in rural areas into poverty, as well as financially burden the state's hospitals and physicians, and make Maine businesses less competitive.

Health care is essential for families to overcome addiction, move into stable employment, and provide a better future for their children. Retaining the ability to access hundreds of millions of dollars in Medicaid funding and federal insurance subsidies is crucial to the future economic health of our state.

Maine's congressional delegation should work with their colleagues and the incoming administration to build on the success of the ACA. Repealing the law without a replacement would roll back lifesaving progress made in the past few years.

Repealing the Affordable Care Act would cause 95,000 fewer Mainers to have health insurance in 2019.

The ACA Improved Access to Affordable Health Insurance

The share of Maine's non-elderly adult population without health insurance fell from 14.6 percent to 11.7 percent since the passage of the ACA.¹ Maine's progress would be even greater were it not for restrictions on Medicaid eligibility enacted by Governor LePage's administration, which removed approximately 35,000 Mainers from that health care program.²

Young adults (aged 18-24), older adults (aged 55-64), and rural Mainers who are more likely to work part-time, seasonally, or be self-employed—groups that previously had the hardest time obtaining affordable insurance—have realized the largest gains from the ACA.

The ACA Made Health Care More Affordable

More than 75,000 Mainers are enrolled in an individual health insurance plan through the Healthcare.gov marketplace lowering their out-of-pocket costs and bringing some \$390 million in federal subsidies annually to the state.³ One in three marketplace enrollees are over the age of 55 and half earn less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level (\$32,000 for a household of two).

The ACA has successfully curtailed the rising costs of insurance premiums in the U.S. and particularly in Maine where annual increases have slowed from an average of eight percent annually pre-ACA to two percent annually, a greater reduction than elsewhere. Average health insurance premiums for Maine employer-sponsored policies have gone from being 13 percent above the national average in 2002 to parity in 2015,⁴ making health insurance more affordable for Maine businesses that want to provide insurance for their employees and improving their competitiveness relative to the rest of the nation.

The ACA Provides Vital Resources to Battle the Opioid Epidemic

The lack of insurance among those suffering from addiction affects hospitals by increasing charitable care for uninsured patients. It also affects employers by removing tens of thousands of workers from the labor force. A quarter of a million Mainers are thought to have a mental illness (including substance abuse).⁵ An estimated 19,000 of these Mainers obtain their health insurance through the federal marketplace,⁶ while an unknown number remain uninsured. Three-quarters of those treated for substance abuse in 2014 were either unemployed or not in the labor force, nearly double the proportion of the general population.⁷

ACA Repeal Would Cause Hospital Debt to Balloon

Repeal of the ACA would be a financial disaster for Maine's hospitals and health care providers. It would mean a reduction in health care spending in Maine of \$560 million in 2019, and \$4.4 billion over the following decade.⁸ Without the ACA, uncompensated care costs for Maine health providers would triple, resulting in additional costs of \$475 million in 2019.

Repeal of the ACA Means Losing the Opportunity for Medicaid Expansion

Repealing the ACA's Medicaid Expansion provision would deny Maine the opportunity afforded 31 other states and the District of Columbia to expand Medicaid. Expansion would bring to Maine \$346 million annually to insure 75,000 low-income Mainers⁹ and save the state \$40 million annually from the use of federal funds for state services.¹⁰ The federal funding would also generate additional economic activity, and support or retain 4,500 jobs in health care and related fields.¹¹

The Maine Center for Economic Policy is a non-partisan, non-profit policy research organization committed to advancing economic justice and prosperity for all Maine people. Visit MECEP's web site for a copy of our full report, Affordable Care Act Repeal Would be a Disaster for Maine.

¹ US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2010 and 2015.

² Ollove, Michael, "Maine Seeks To Cut Medicaid Eligibility", *Kaiser Health News*, Oct 3, 2012. Web.

³ [95,000 Maine Residents Would Lose Health Coverage in 2019 Under ACA Repeal](#), Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2016. Web.

⁴ US Department of Health and Human Services, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Medical Expenditure Survey 2001-15.

⁵ Dey, Judith, et al., "Benefits of Medicaid Expansion for Behavioral Health," US Department of Health and Human Services, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, Mar. 28, 2016. Web.

⁶ Frank, Richard and Sherry Glied, "Keep Obamacare to Keep Progress on Treating Opioid Disorders and Mental Illnesses," *The Hill*, Jan. 11, 2017.

Web. Data available at [Harvard Medical School, Department of Health Care Policy](#).

⁷ US Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Agency, 2014 Treatment Episode Data Set.

⁸ Buettgens, Matthew, et al., "Partial Repeal of the ACA through Reconciliation: Coverage Implications for Parents and Children," *Urban Institute*, Dec. 2016. Web.

⁹ "MaineCare Expansion is Still a Great Deal," *Maine Center for Economic Policy*, Feb. 24, 2016. Web.

¹⁰ Bachrach, Deborah, et. al., "Estimated State Budget Impact of a MaineCare Expansion in 2016," *Manatt Health Solutions*, Apr. 2015. Web.

¹¹ "Unprecedented Opportunity: Federal Health Care Funds Will Deliver 4,400 Jobs and \$500,000,000 in Annual Economic Activity to Maine by 2016," *Maine Center for Economic Policy*, Jan. 14, 2014. Web.