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NMA OPPOSES AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

Silver Spring, Maryland (May 5, 2017) - On May 4, 2017, the United States House of Representatives voted in favor of repealing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and passing the American Health Care Act with a narrow vote of 217 to 213, sending the bill to the Senate for deliberation.

The National Medical Association opposes the House plan that will make detrimental changes to our current health care system. The AHCA is a bad bill. It will hurt the poor, vulnerable, elderly, and indigent. It will do things such as decrease the life of Medicare, increase the costs of medical care for those who can least afford increased insurance payments, and give tax breaks to the richest 1 per cent of our nation and insurance companies. Health experts say that if this provision is enacted, costs for people in need of specific essential health benefits will likely face higher premiums.

President Trump campaigned on developing a health care plan that would provide insurance to all. However, the irony of the AHCA is that the bill that was passed yesterday is projected to cause millions lose coverage and those with pre-existing conditions face going back in time to when insurance companies are allowed to price them out of being able to secure coverage.

According to AARP, “Medicaid cuts [as a result of AHCA] could impact people of all ages and put at risk the health and safety of 17.4 million children and adults with disabilities and seniors by eliminating much-needed services that allow individuals to live independently in their homes and communities. Although no one believes the current health care system is perfect, this harmful legislation would make health care less secure and less affordable”.

The NMA echoes those sentiments. We denounce this bill and believe that it is a dire step in the wrong direction. NMA President Richard Allen Williams said in a statement “Medicaid will be wiped out, exposing even more poor Americans, most of whom are black and Hispanic, to inordinate risk; essential health benefits will be tossed out; and 130 million people, or more than one-third of the American public, have pre-existing medical conditions and would be adversely affected by the new bill. The damage that the new bill will do is even worse than the previous one;
we don't know yet how bad the damage will be until the bill's provisions are scored by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office in about a week.”

The NMA urges Congress to work collaboratively to make appropriate changes to ObamaCare; not enact harm on the most vulnerable and poor in our society.

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**Founded in 1895, the National Medical Association (NMA) is the nation’s oldest and largest medical association representing the interests of African American physicians and the patients they serve. The NMA advocates for policies that would assure equitable and quality health care for all people. The NMA is dedicated to reducing and eliminating disparities in health and improving the lives of our patients, their families, and their communities. For more information on the NMA visit, [www.NMAnet.org](http://www.NMAnet.org)**