
Senate Republicans Leaders' Plan Doubles Down on Disastrous House Path: Higher Costs for Families, Millions More Uninsured People, and Children Without Enough to Eat

Statement of CBPP President Sharon Parrott on Senate Republican Leaders' Reconciliation Proposals:

Rather than course correct, Senate Republican leaders are rushing to advance a bill that is in some ways even more destructive and harmful than the unpopular House Republican bill. The Senate must reject it.

It shocks the conscience that Senate Republican leaders saw the impacts of the House bill — 16 million more people uninsured and millions losing help buying groceries, including families with children — and chose to double down. Add in the President's tariffs and this agenda would make all but the highest-income 20 percent of households *worse off*.

The health provisions in the Senate Republican leaders' plan are, alarmingly, even harsher and more damaging than the [health provisions of the House Republican bill](#). Under both plans, tens of millions of people would face substantially higher health care costs and millions would lose access to life-saving treatments, routine care, and medications they need.

While the truth may cause some Republican supporters of the plan to bristle, it must be said: taking health coverage away from people will result in unnecessary deaths.

The Senate Republican leaders' plan would also [cut or take food assistance away entirely from millions of people](#) — including children, veterans, workers in low-paying jobs, older adults, people experiencing homelessness, and people with disabilities — at a time when many families are already struggling with the high cost of groceries, which could rise further as a result of tariffs. The bill's massive, unaffordable cost-shift to states could even lead some states to end their SNAP programs *entirely*. This would abandon a decades-long bipartisan commitment to ensuring that children get enough to eat, no matter what state they live in.

Like the House Republican bill, the Senate Republican plan would take help away from working people and their families, making it much harder for them to get help when they fall on hard times. Both bills take health coverage away from a large number of people who can't meet a work

requirement or show they are exempt. Many people who *are* working would get caught up in a web of red tape and [lose their health coverage](#) as a result. Other workers who need help because their employer cuts their hours or lays them off, or because they get sick or have to miss work to care for a sick loved one, would also have their Medicaid taken away. None of this is about helping them get jobs more quickly.

Here the Senate plan is *more* extreme than the House Republican bill. The House protected parents from the work requirement, recognizing that it could leave families with unaffordable medical bills that would make it hard to afford rent or without the health care they need to care for their children. The Senate bill, by contrast, extends this ineffective requirement to parents with children aged 15 and older. Parents don't need more red tape when they are working, sick, or between jobs — what they need is health care so they can care for their families and be well enough to work.

Both the House and Senate bills also apply this misguided requirement to parents and older adults in SNAP, putting the health and well-being of millions more people at risk. In the House, the provision applies to parents with children aged 7 and over. The Senate Agriculture Committee plan set the age at 10, and this may change to align with Medicaid. Regardless of the age of children in families who would be affected, it is a deeply misguided policy to put the food assistance that families need to feed their children at risk in service to an ineffective and red tape-laden work requirement that research has shown does not improve employment outcomes.

Both the House and Senate Republican bills direct some of their harshest health and food assistance cuts toward people who are immigrants and their families — taking specific aim at people here lawfully, including those with immigration-related humanitarian protections. Here, again, the [Senate Republican leaders' proposal](#) is harsher and more damaging in many ways.

The House bill blocks immigrants who have been granted humanitarian protection, including refugees, people granted asylum, certain victims of sex or labor trafficking, and certain domestic violence survivors, from getting SNAP; *the Senate Republican proposal extends that ban to Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program*. Both the House and Senate bill also take Medicare and the premium tax credits that make Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace coverage affordable away from this same group — people who the U.S. government has determined need protection.

Make no mistake: the cuts in federal benefits come from taking health coverage away from immigrants in the country *lawfully*. People who don't have a documented immigration status are already ineligible.

As with the House Republican bill, the Senate Republican plan inflicts all of this harm to partly [pay for unnecessary tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations](#). It extends the highly skewed provisions of the 2017 tax law and adds *permanent* expansions for wealthy households, including an expanded tax break for wealthy heirs, while leaving behind 17 million children in low-income families (most of them working families), who will get no help at all from even the small increase in

the Child Tax Credit included in the plan. Altogether, both the House and Senate bills would transfer income from people with the lowest incomes to people with the very highest.

Faced with similar, catastrophic projected health coverage losses in 2017, a small group of Republican Senators, along with Democrats, had the courage to defeat the disastrous ACA repeal effort. There is still time for Republican Senators to do the same again.

Saying no to this bill — or any bill that raises costs and takes health coverage and food assistance away from people struggling to afford the basics — is the right decision for the country.

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