

Resolution urging the United States Congress, specifically those members representing the people of Ohio, to oppose any and all attacks on affordable, accessible and comprehensive health coverage for Americans (Commissioners)

WHEREAS, Americans want and deserve health care that allows children to grow into their full potential, makes it possible for seniors to live fully in their families and communities, and that does not force anyone into impossible choices between lifesaving treatments and putting food on the table; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive health coverage is essential to ensuring working families and retirees receive the health care they need, when they need it; and

WHEREAS, health insurance should be affordable for all Americans; and

WHEREAS, Medicare is a promise to the American people that must be kept for current and future generations, including the 55 million seniors and people with disabilities enrolled today and the many millions more counting on it for their retirement years; and

WHEREAS, converting Medicare into a voucher system betrays that promise because benefits would no longer be guaranteed and health care costs for seniors and people with disabilities would rise dramatically; and

WHEREAS, raising the Medicare eligibility age from 65 to 67 will not only harm millions of American seniors, but also increase costs for employers and states because they will have to cover medical costs for people ages 65 and 66; and

WHEREAS, employer-sponsored health coverage represents the largest share of health coverage in the United States, covering 178 million workers, retirees, and their family members; and

WHEREAS, proposals by some members of Congress to tax employer-sponsored health coverage by including the cost of coverage in workers' taxable income will penalize working people by raising their taxes, resulting in cuts to their health benefits, increased deductibles, and other out-of-pocket requirements, and may even lead to the elimination of health coverage by some employers; and

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WHEREAS, the Affordable Care Act (ACA) is an important step toward providing comprehensive, affordable health care for all; and

WHEREAS, the ACA has reduced the percentage of people without health insurance to historic lows by guaranteeing every American's right to buy insurance, providing new financial support for buying individual coverage, expanding Medicaid, and encouraging many employers to contribute toward the cost of workers' health benefits; and

WHEREAS, the ACA requires insurance companies to treat consumers fairly, to provide meaningful insurance without deceptions, and to not discriminate against anyone based on pre-existing conditions or gender; and

WHEREAS, the ACA expands coverage for mental health care and substance use disorder treatment and builds on the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act of 2008 to ensure federal parity protections for an estimated 62 million Americans; and

WHEREAS, the ACA's expansion of health coverage has provided much needed help in addressing the opioid addiction crisis; and

WHEREAS, repealing the ACA without a replacement will put 30 million people at risk of losing health coverage entirely, and it will strip away vital protections and benefits from the many millions more with Medicare, Medicaid, and workplace coverage; and

WHEREAS, more than 74 million people get health coverage through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); and

WHEREAS, repealing the ACA in its entirety will take health coverage away from the approximately 11 million people who gained coverage through the law's Medicaid expansion provisions; and

WHEREAS, cutting federal funding to Ohio for Medicaid through block grants or per capita caps will shift health care costs onto our state,

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forcing impossible choices among cutting health benefits or limiting eligibility for programs, taking funding away from other essential services, or forcing state taxpayers to pay more; and

WHEREAS, cutting federal funding to Ohio for Medicaid will threaten the health care, nursing home care and long-term care supports and services that allow seniors and people of all ages with disabilities to live independently in their own homes and communities; and

WHEREAS, cutting federal funding to Ohio for Medicaid will threaten the health coverage that, together with the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), ensure that one-in-three children can get the medical care they need; now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS, FRANKLIN COUNTY, OHIO:

That the Franklin County Board of Commissioners hereby urges the United States Congress, specifically those members representing the people of Ohio, to oppose any and all attacks on health coverage for Americans, including but not limited to:

- The conversion of the Medicare program into a voucher system or an increase in the eligibility age beyond 65
- The imposition of new taxes or other threats to employer-sponsored health coverage
- The repeal of the ACA without a replacement plan that protects all working families and seniors and ensures that anyone with coverage today is able to afford it and keep it
- Any and all reductions in coverage for mental health care and substance use disorder treatment, including a reduction in parity with physical health-related coverage
- The repeal of the ACA's Medicaid expansion to millions of people, and
- The conversion of Medicaid to block grants or a per capita cap system for federal funding.

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The Board urges Congress to support only reforms that bring us closer to the goal of providing comprehensive, accessible, and affordable health coverage for all.

Prepared by: Lauren Rummel

cc: President O'Grady