United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 2, 2025

Over 24 million people turned to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Marketplaces to purchase affordable health insurance for 2025. This year marked another year of growth for the Marketplaces, driving the country's uninsured rate to a historic low. Millions of families, small business owners, self-employed workers, family caregivers, people near retirement but not yet eligible for Medicare, and people who are looking for work all used premium tax credits to purchase coverage on the Marketplaces and access life-saving care. But this is all at risk.

We write seeking information about how Republicans' actions will affect Americans' access to affordable health coverage in the Marketplaces, and we encourage health plans to provide ample, early education to enrollees about the consequences of ending the enhanced premium tax credits. While some information about statewide average rate increases has been made public over the course of this summer, individuals and families need clear, direct information from their health plans as soon as possible about their rising premiums and cost-sharing requirements, and worsening coverage. Insurers are best positioned to share that information with their enrollees, and we urge you to do so as early and directly as possible. Under these dire circumstances, annual premium notices set to be released in October will not come soon enough.

Actions taken by the Trump Administration and Congressional Republicans threaten the outstanding progress achieved since the passage of the ACA. On July 4, 2025, the President signed the Republican budget reconciliation bill into law. This legislation cuts more than $1 trillion from Medicaid and the ACA and will terminate health insurance for more than 15 million people. While Republicans in the House and Senate chose to extend nearly $4 trillion in tax cuts for billionaires and wealthy corporations, they did not extend the premium tax credits that over 20 million Americans rely on for their health coverage. These tax credits, used to make ACA Marketplace plans more affordable, will expire at the end of the calendar year. Failure to extend these tax credits will cause premiums to skyrocket by 75% on average, meaning Americans would be saddled with rising health care costs beginning January 1, 2026.

The Trump Administration has also taken executive actions that undermine the goal of ensuring Americans are covered by comprehensive, affordable health insurance, finalizing an ACA rule that will make it harder to enroll and stay enrolled in coverage, shorten annual Open Enrollment, and allow health insurance plans to offer worse coverage. This rule makes it harder for eligible people to keep their health insurance coverage and makes it easier for companies to raise premiums and out-of-pocket costs while covering fewer services. The Centers for Medicare &

Medicaid Services' (CMS) own estimates find that up to 1.8 million eligible people will lose coverage in 2026 alone because of the rule.

Publicly available rate filings have cited the Trump Administration's pursuit of sweeping tariffs as one of the factors driving notable rate increases. While these double-digit rate filings provide helpful insight on how insurers are preparing for the 2026 plan year, they do not provide a full picture of how health insurance companies weigh consumer options and affordability in a destabilized marketplace. We request the following information to better understand how insurers who offer qualified health plans on the ACA Marketplaces are responding to actions taken by the Trump Administration and Congressional Republicans and how these policy changes will impact consumer choice and affordability.

Weighing the factors that are driving uncertainty in the ACA Marketplaces that could significantly impact insurers' decisions on what plans to offer and at what price – passage of the Republican reconciliation bill, Trump's final ACA rule, failure to extend the ACA enhanced premium tax credits, and Trump's tariff policy – please respond to the below questions in writing by Monday, September 15, 2025.

1. If the enhanced premium tax credits are not extended by September 30, 2025, how will the increased premiums that potential enrollees see during window shopping and Open Enrollment impact 2026 enrollment?
2. If enhanced premium tax credits are not extended by September 30, 2025, how many people will lose coverage because they choose not to enroll, and not return to purchase coverage in the Marketplace even if Congress acts to reduce premiums before January 1, 2026?
    a. Do you anticipate the average age of these people to be higher or lower than the overall risk pool?
    b. How do you anticipate the average health status of these people would compare to the overall risk pool?
    c. At what income level do you anticipate the largest drop in coverage to occur?
3. If healthier people choose not to enroll in ACA coverage due to the drastic premium increases, how will that impact state risk pools across the country?
4. How many enrollees do you expect to drop coverage if zero-dollar premium plans are no longer available in 2026?
5. Please describe how attracting younger, healthier enrollees who utilize little, or at times no, health care services in a year impacts the insurance risk pool and premiums and protects these enrollees should they require emergency services during the year.
6. If the enhanced premium tax credits are not extended, will you change affordability considerations to keep out-of-pocket costs low for enrollees? If so, please provide more information.
7. Enhanced premium tax credits are important for people in rural areas to stay enrolled in health insurance. Previous analysis has found that sparsely populated areas might have no non-group insurance offered because the reductions in subsidies would lead fewer people to decide to purchase insurance—and markets with few purchasers are less profitable for insurers. Insurance covering certain services would also become more expensive. Can

you please provide analysis about which counties are vulnerable to such changes that could lead to insurers exiting the market?
8. Are there additional consequences if Republicans do not act to extend the premium tax credits by September 30, 2025, for insurers and consumers?
9. If action is not taken by September 30, 2025, what will the consequences be if Republicans still do not act by December 31, 2025, for insurers and consumers?
10. Are there any other factors driving the double-digit rate filings?

The Trump Administration and Congressional Republicans refused to extend premium tax credits in their reconciliation tax bill, used reconciliation to add red tape to ACA enrollment and re-enrollment that will destabilize state insurance markets, and further undermined enrollment and quality of coverage available on the ACA Marketplaces through their final rule. Taken together, these actions are sending the ACA Marketplaces into a death spiral. It is working American families who will suffer, with millions losing coverage, and millions more experiencing a drastic spike in their health care costs. As House and Senate Democrats work to avert this catastrophe—urging Republicans to act—we ask that you share information with Congress, and with your enrollees, that only your organizations and members can provide on the consequences of Republicans' ACA policies for the health and well-being of American families.

Sincerely,

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on Finance

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions