



**PARTNERSHIP  
FOR AMERICA'S  
CHILDREN**  
Connecting, strengthening, and inspiring  
state and local child advocates

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Partnership for America's Children is a network of 51 nonpartisan children's policy and advocacy organizations in 41 states working to improve children's health, economic well-being, safety and education. We are writing in opposition to the *American Health Care Act* because of its impact on the health and well-being of America's children and families.

Partnership members are:

- Multi-issue, recognizing the needs of the whole child and therefore advocating for children from cradle to adulthood across six major policy areas,
- Independent, setting their own agendas based solely on what is best for children,
- Nonpartisan, providing rigorous, evidence-based data and analysis to all policymakers, and
- Nonprofit, putting the needs of children and their families first.

Partnership members have worked for decades to increase children's and parents' access to health insurance and health care. In the 1990's, Partnership members across the country worked to ensure that states enacted CHIP programs with the best possible benefits and structure for children, and then worked to increase enrollment in that program and Medicaid. They have also fought to improve state Medicaid and CHIP programs for children and their parents. They are particularly aware of the harm to children when health insurance programs are underfunded. For example, when provider reimbursement rates are too low, insured children still do not get health care because providers refuse to enroll.

Children's health is essential for their ability to succeed in school and in life, and during the past twenty years, our nation has made enormous strides to ensure that children have access to health insurance coverage and child-centered primary health care. Today, 95% of America's children have health insurance coverage – an historic high. This progress in connecting children to vital, preventive health care has been due to Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and the ACA. Children are more likely to be insured if their parents also have health insurance and the ACA has contributed to the most recent increase in children's health insurance rates.

Partnership for America's Children position on the AHCA

Children who have health insurance coverage are healthier and have fewer preventable hospitalizations. They are more likely to receive preventive medical and dental care, be screened for developmental milestones, obtain needed timely treatment and miss fewer days of school.

Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) provide low-income children with affordable, comprehensive health benefits which have been shown to increase access to primary and preventive care for children and to improve long-term health, academic, and economic outcomes. States have made it a priority to build high quality children's health insurance programs in partnership with the federal government, with the Medicaid program at the core of this success.

The per capita caps for Medicaid that are included in the *American Health Care Act* would reverse the over 50 year commitment to the guarantee of needed health and development services to eligible children, parents and pregnant women. It is estimated that the bill's Medicaid changes will result in \$880 billion in federal Medicaid cuts over the next ten years. The burden will shift to states who will have to decide how to allocate significantly reduced federal dollars and children's critical health care and the child-centered set of health care and development services will be at risk. While it is being described as a way to give states greater flexibility in their use of Medicaid dollars, Medicaid caps will instead dramatically reduce the Medicaid funding states have relied on and will dismantle Medicaid's flexible financing structure that provides additional funding when states hit economic downturns or experience natural disasters or public health emergencies.

The provision within the American Health Care Act to dramatically restructure Medicaid and remove its guarantee of funding for all eligible children, parents and pregnant women is a major policy shift that is being rushed through without a single hearing on the consequences of such a dramatic change to a program that has helped states serve America's most vulnerable populations, including children, for over fifty years. Almost 50% of Medicaid beneficiaries are children and the proposed restructuring of Medicaid puts children at risk.

Taken together, the Congressional Budget Office estimate that 24 million Americans will lose coverage as a result of the *American Health Care Act* and the ramifications of caps on Medicaid will reverse the nation's progress in children's health insurance coverage and child health outcomes.

Our nation's economic prosperity depends on the health and well-being of its children. We urge you to build on the progress that has been made through the leadership of Congress and states across the country over the past two decades to ensure that children and families have access to high quality health insurance coverage --rather than reversing this progress by taking away the fundamental protections of the Medicaid program for children, parents, pregnant women and children with disabilities.

If you would like further information, please contact Deborah Stein at [dstein@4americaschildren.org](mailto:dstein@4americaschildren.org) or 202-290-1816.

Sincerely,

Partnership for America's Children

Partnership for America's Children position on the AHCA

Members of the Partnership for America's Children endorsing this letter

Children's Action Alliance (AZ)  
Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families  
Children's Advocacy Institute (CA)  
Children Now (CA)  
The Children's Partnership (CA)  
Colorado Children's Campaign  
Connecticut Association for Human Services  
KIDS COUNT in Delaware  
Hawaii Children's Action Network  
Idaho Voices for Children  
Marion County Commission on Youth, Inc. (IN)  
Child and Family Policy Center (IA)  
Kansas Action for Children  
Maine Children's Alliance  
Advocates for Children and Youth (MD)  
Michigan's Children  
Voices for Children in Nebraska  
Children's Advocacy Alliance (NV)  
Advocates for Children of New Jersey  
New Mexico Voices for Children  
Schuyler Center For Analysis and Advocacy (NY)  
Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc.  
The Children's Agenda (Rochester, NY)  
Westchester Children's Association (NY)  
NC Child (NC)  
Voices for Ohio's Children  
Children First for Oregon  
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children  
Public Citizens for Children and Youth (PA)  
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT  
Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth  
Texans Care for Children  
Voices for Children of San Antonio (TX)  
Voices for Utah Children  
Voices for Vermont's Children  
Voices for Virginia's Children  
Wisconsin Council on Children and Families