

Defending the Affordable Care Act

Background:

The administration of President Trump, along with Republicans in Congress have affirmatively acted to repeal and replace the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (“ACA”). Industry experts have concluded that the ACA is not in a “death spiral” as is claimed by many Republicans. In fact, in a report published on March 13, 2017, the Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation asserted that “the non-group market would probably be stable in most areas under either current law or the legislation.” Additionally, Matthew Fiedler, a fellow with the Center for Health Policy at the nonpartisan Brookings Institution has stated that “It...remains likely that insurers’ individual market business will return to a roughly break-even or slightly profitable position in 2017, absent other policy changes.”

Actions and statements by the Trump administration and other Republicans suggest that they may deliberately undermine the stability of the insurance markets and that they could do so in many ways, including, but not limited to: eliminating subsidies to purchase insurance that would maintain sufficient demand for insurance among the healthy population; eliminating grants to states from the Patient and State Stability Fund which reduce the cost to insurers of insuring high-risk patients; undermining confidence in the insurance markets by not doing their part to encourage insurers to participate in markets with fewer players; refusing to market the exchanges to bolster enrollment and ensure a sustainable risk pool (in fact, the Trump administration *already* did this in January 2017, causing actual enrollment numbers to fall short of estimates); refusing to enforce the individual mandate by having excessively lax hardship exemptions, and/or continuing to attempt to repeal and replace the ACA with legislation that would provide less coverage to Americans.

If the ACA is allowed to fail in the name of political expediency, Americans will suffer real life or death consequences that will disproportionately impact the old, the poor, and the sick. No American life should be treated as collateral in order to advance a political objective. It is the position of the Virginia Eighth Congressional District Convention that our fellow Americans are human beings endowed with certain unalienable rights and that each is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect.

Therefore, be it resolved that: the 2017 Eighth District Democratic Convention:

1. Opposes any efforts on the part of the Trump administration, or anyone else, to undermine the ACA;
2. Opposes any further efforts to repeal and replace the ACA with legislation that will reduce affordability and/or provide less coverage to Americans;
3. Affirms that healthcare is a human right to be afforded to all Americans and endorses the eventual adoption of a universal single payer healthcare system.