

Senate Republican AHCA Bill Released, Vote May Happen Soon

Call NY Senators at 1-202-224-3121 or www.senate.gov/senators/contact/

The Better Care Reconciliation Act 2017 – The Senate Republican version of the American Health Care Act - was released last week. It is largely not good news.

- The passage of this bill would **eliminate Medicaid expansion and all but end Medicaid as we know it**, cutting off health care for tens of millions of people and enacting even deeper cuts than the House bill. People living with HIV can expect a drastic rollback to a pre-ACA world. States that use AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) to purchase insurance will have fewer marketplace options, and individuals will likely become more reliant on the Ryan White Program than ever before. The Williams Institute estimates that 984,000 LGBTQ Americans may become uninsured by 2026 as a result of proposed changes to the ACA.
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- | Year | Number of LGBTQ Adults Estimated to Become Uninsured |
|------|--|
| 2018 | 574,000 |
| 2020 | 861,000 |
| 2026 | 984,000 |
- The Senate version of the AHCA also **maintains the House bill's provisions allowing states to circumvent the Essential Health Benefits put in place under the ACA** through the use of a waiver system, which would allow insurers to no longer cover services like mental health or maternity care. Because states would no longer be required to cover certain pre-existing conditions, people with opioid, mental health, and substance use disorders would be hit especially hard.
 - Additionally, the proposed bill hurts New York. **New York's Essential Plan, which enrolls nearly 700,000 New Yorkers in low-cost health insurance plans, likely would not survive** because it relies on federal funding that would disappear.
 - The Senate bill includes an amendment sponsored by Reps. John Faso and Chris Collins that would effectively **prohibit the state from using county taxes to pay for the Medicaid program**, costing the state millions.
 - The more severe Medicaid cuts would hit between 2020 and 2024, according to the Senate bill, which **phases out the enhanced federal match states such as New York received from the federal government** because of Obamacare. In its place, there would be a per-capita cap assigned to each state. The per-capita cap would be based on what a state spent between 2014 and 2017, but high-cost states such as New York would see their per capita reduced by the secretary of Health and Human Services by as much as 2 percent.
 - To make matters worse, shoppers on the individual insurance market would see the **value of their subsidies decrease**.

To move this legislation, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell needs 50 Republicans willing to vote for it. They don't have to like it. Vice President Mike Pence could be the tie-breaker. Once the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) score on

the Senate version of the AHCA comes back, which is expected imminently, McConnell can move the bill to the floor for a vote after a scant 20 hours of debate.

Call Senators Schumer and Gillibrand! We know that our own New York State Senators were not part of the secretive drafting process and are against the repeal of the ACA. However, they need to hear from us about how this legislation will impact the LGBT and PLWHA community and to know we support them in their efforts to stop this from happening. From personal stories, to words of encouragement to keep fighting for us, let them know your voice counts.

New York State Legislative Session Ends

The New York State Legislature **wrapped up its legislative session on the first day of summer, June 21st**. At the time this newsletter went to print, legislators were debating many bills and legislative issues and expected to stay in session through the evening.

Callen-Lorde this year advanced an agenda that included **universal health care for New York State**, the longstanding **Gender Non-Discrimination Act GENDA**, a bill that **prohibits sexual orientation change therapy**, comprehensive **sexual health education**, a bill that would **extend HASA-like benefits upstate** and a bill that would allow licensed **mental health counselors to be able to bill Medicaid for their services** in an Article 28 setting. Some of these bills got really close this year, but alas, nothing passed both houses. We'll be back at it next year!



City Budget Deal Done. Callen-Lorde Fares Well.

On June 6, 2017, the New York City Council and Mayor agreed upon an \$85.2 billion budget deal.

The new spending includes \$26 million for legal services for immigrants as well as \$105.53 million in capital funding and \$1.8 million in expense to expand physical education to all schools by 2021. The Council, meanwhile, got new money for several of its priorities including \$23 million to end the waiting list for home care for seniors, \$25 million to expand a property tax credit for veterans who served in war time, \$9 million to expand the Summer Youth Employment Program, and a \$7.2 million increase — that's a 15 percent hike — in funding for emergency food assistance. The Ending the Epidemic initiative got a bump up of roughly \$700,000 to \$6,295,000. Allocations will be determined after the fiscal year starts.

What Will Happen to the ACA's Non-Discrimination Provision, Section 1557?

Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act is the first federal civil rights rule to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age and disability. It has been a significant step toward health equity in the ACA.

The current Administration has signaled that it plans to reverse Section 1557. After the Section 1557 rule was implemented under Obama, a group of five states and religiously-affiliated health care organizations filed suit against the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), specifically challenging the provisions of the Section 1557 rule that interpreted sex discrimination to include discrimination based on gender identity and termination of pregnancy. As a result, a federal judge granted a temporary nationwide injunction which barred HHS from enforcing the rule.

Now, the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Attorney General have filed a voluntary stay and remand of the case! We know that Section 1557, among other things, is essential for addressing the widespread discrimination against transgender people in health care. Transgender people regularly experience discriminatory treatment in health care. Transgender people also frequently face discriminatory transgender-specific exclusions in insurance plans that allow insurance issuers to deny coverage for medically-necessary gender affirmation treatments. The Section 1557 rule prohibits these types of transgender-specific blanket exclusions in health insurance plans.

The court filing from the Trump Administration signals that HHS would like to reconsider the provisions of the Section 1557 rule related to discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Callen-Lorde fared well in this year’s budget receiving renewal funding for our sexual and reproductive health, women’s health and care for the uninsured in addition to a small renewal grant for healthcare for LGBTQ youth in the Bronx. We also were allocated new funding to conduct pre-development and needs assessment work for Brooklyn, to purchase a new mobile medical unit as well as a new redundant HVAC unit for floors 2-6 at West 18th Street. If you see any of the Members below out in the community or if any of them represent YOU, please thank them for their support of Callen-Lorde this year!

Project	Funding	Who to Thank	How to Reach
Sexual health, Uninsured	\$100k	LGBT Caucus, Chair Mendez	Rmendez@council.nyc.gov
Sexual health, uninsured	\$150k	Speaker Mark-Viverito	mviverito@council.nyc.gov
Bronx services	\$5k	Ritchie Torres	rtorres@council.nyc.gov
Brooklyn Needs Assessment	\$150K		Thank any or all of the following members Cornegy, Cumbo, Lander, Levin, Maisel, Menchaca - especially if you live in their district!
HVAC Floors 2-6 at W.18	\$676k*	Corey Johnson, Speaker	cjohnson@council.nyc.gov ; mviverito@council.nyc.gov
Mobile Medical Unit	\$100k	Boro Prez Gale Brewer	gbrewer@manhattanbp.nyc.gov
Mobile Medical Unit	\$272k*	Ritchie Torres	rtorres@council.nyc.gov
<i>*Amounts are approximate</i>			

Enroll in the PRIDE Study!

The **PRIDE Study** is the first large-scale, long-term health study of people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ), designed with LGTB people, to answer questions that are important to us.

Callen-Lorde is a community partner for the study, which is produced by a team of LGBTQ doctors and scientists at the University of California, San Francisco. Committee and Kimberleigh Smith is a

LGBTQ health advocates fear that our LGBTQ issues are being removed from Americans say their doctors fail to systematically collecting data on all this by enrolling in the study ourselves friends to do the same. It’s long. It will can complete the survey on-line or by your sexual orientation, gender identity,



Dr. Asa Radix serves on the Advisory community liaison.

progress is threatened. Questions about national surveys and 90% of LGBTQ understand LGBTQ health. No one else is aspects of our health. We can help change and encouraging our LGBTQ patients and take up to 60 minutes to complete, but you phone. You will be asked questions about and physical, mental and social health.

Participation is 100% confidential. Everything is protected with state-of-the-art security.

Learn more and enroll here: <https://pridestudy.org/>

Who Can Enroll?

Anyone who lives in the US or Territories, identifies as LGBTQ, and is 18 years or older

How Do I Enroll?

With your computer, tablet, or smartphone, to <https://pridestudy.org/> and click on the “JOIN TODAY” button. You can also enroll by calling toll-free 1-855-421-9991 (or 415-476-4221 if calling from the U.S. Virgin Islands or American Samoa) and the research team will sign you up.