



HUMAN  
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Written Statement of  
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To the  
Committee on Finance  
United States Senate  
Hearing to Consider the Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson Proposal  
September 25, 2017

I submit this statement on behalf of the Human Rights Campaign's 2 million members and supporters nationwide. As the nation's largest civil rights organization working to promote equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people, we are deeply concerned about the proposed plan by Senators Lindsey Graham and Bill Cassidy to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and the negative impact that it would have on communities such as ours that already face systemic discrimination and healthcare disparities.

By drastically restructuring the Medicaid program, and repealing the ACA's expansion of that program, Graham-Cassidy would have a swift, stark, and devastating impact on vulnerable Americans, including LGBTQ individuals or persons living with HIV. Under the ACA's Medicaid expansion, thousands of low-income people living with HIV were able to obtain health insurance before becoming disabled by the virus, thereby ensuring that these individuals had access to lifesaving treatments. This critical change ensures that people living with HIV have access to the medical care and treatment necessary to live longer, healthier lives. Graham-Cassidy's changes to Medicaid will undoubtedly strip these persons and other, similarly situated vulnerable populations of the essential healthcare they need and undermine progress in America's fight against its HIV epidemic.

The proposed legislation detrimentally affects members of our community by increasing the out-of-pocket cost of insurance for our vulnerable citizens. LGBTQ people already have some of the lowest insurance rates of any population in the country. Under previous repeal and replace legislation with comparable provisions for block-granting Medicaid the Congressional Budget Office, projected 32 million people could ultimately lose health coverage. These projections foreshadow an unacceptable growth in healthcare disparity rather than improved access for thousands of LGBTQ individuals if Graham-Cassidy is enacted.

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Additionally, Graham-Cassidy's proposed elimination of tax subsidies and enhanced matching rate for Medicaid expansion in favor of block grants to states promises to leave more Americans without affordable and essential healthcare coverage they need. Graham-Cassidy's proposed revisions to the ACA will make healthcare less affordable and accessible, especially for Americans with chronic conditions such as HIV. Our community has benefited from the ACA's tax credit structure and the Medicaid expansion that the Graham-Cassidy threatens to demolish. Rescinding both the tax structure and Medicaid expansion will effectively price low-income families and individuals out of coverage with devastating consequences for a community already facing significant healthcare disparities.

Finally, Graham-Cassidy undermines patient choice and access to reproductive care and contraception services provided by Planned Parenthood Federation of America by eliminating funding to these clinics. Rescinding federal funding jeopardizes these clinics' ability to deliver preventive healthcare services, such as HIV testing, and transition-related care. In many communities, health centers such as Planned Parenthood are the only culturally competent healthcare providers for LGBTQ people, and this is especially in rural and isolated areas.

This flawed proposal turns a blind eye to the essential health benefits that millions of Americans have come to rely upon. For the aforementioned reasons, the Human Rights Campaign opposes the Graham-Cassidy amendment.