

Response to lawsuit to eliminate Affordable Care Act

Written by By Russell Toal New Mexico Superintendent of Insurance
Friday, 10 July 2020 06:22



SANTA FE — Despite a once-in-a-generation pandemic and an economic collapse never experienced in our lifetime, the Trump administration has decided to press the Supreme Court of the United States to eliminate the *Affordable Care Act* in its entirety.

That would mean 24 million Americans losing their health insurance; people with pre-existing conditions being denied coverage or charged exorbitant rates because of their illness; eliminating the federal and state health insurance exchanges; removing children up to age 26 from their parents' health insurance policy; and eliminating critical federal health care funding for Medicaid expansion and premium assistance.

There is never an appropriate time to put people's health care at risk.

But as New Mexico approaches 12,000 Coronavirus cases, this is the *worst* possible moment to advocate for the full repeal of the *Affordable Care Act*.

If this lawsuit succeeds, it is likely that at least 300,000 New Mexicans would lose health coverage immediately. One estimate shows that New Mexico's uninsured rate would jump from 11 percent to 24 percent overnight.

The 844,000 New Mexicans with pre-existing conditions would once again be subject to higher

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charges and denial of coverage.

Repeal of the ACA would mean that individuals who had COVID-19 would likely be denied health insurance. The same would be true of New Mexicans with cancer, HIV, asthma or health conditions. This absolutely is not the time to even consider dismantling ACA coverage.

Instead, we should move towards making improvements, especially as so many people who have lost their jobs are relying on the law's protections and coverage programs.

To that end, I applaud the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Enhancement Act*.

The bill would improve premium assistance for working families, negotiate lower prescription drug costs, and provide more federal funding for critical health programs like Medicaid.

These are the kinds of actions that we need right now. I hope that the Supreme Court will provide support to our nation's effort to make health care available and affordable."

By Russell Toal
New Mexico Superintendent of Insurance