



Press release

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ACA repeal threatens healthcare for 1 million Ohioans

Ohio hospitals to lose \$15 billion by 2026

Repealing the Affordable Care Act would jeopardize healthcare for nearly 1 million Ohioans, saddle Ohio's hospitals with \$15 billion in costs and drain \$3.5 billion from the upcoming state budget, according to a new report by Policy Matters Ohio.

As President-elect Donald Trump and leaders of the Republican-controlled Congress plan to scrap the ACA, Policy Matters' new report shows the law's widely-felt benefits in Ohio. In 2013, 11 percent of Ohioans lacked health insurance compared to 6.5 percent in 2015. Almost 700,000 Ohioans are covered under Medicaid expansion. An estimated 212,000 Ohioans enrolled in marketplace coverage, most with subsidies defraying the cost. The subsidies have added a cumulative \$535 million to Ohio families' budgets.

"We've gained significantly from the ACA, though some may not realize it," said report author, Policy Matters Senior Project Director Wendy Patton. "People with pre-existing conditions can get a health plan in the individual market. Women don't have to pay higher rates than men. Limits or caps on lifetime coverage are prohibited."

Repealing the ACA also deals a blow to Ohio's hospitals and health systems, which will be forced to provide more uncompensated care for the uninsured. The American Hospital Association projects Ohio's hospitals will lose \$15 billion between 2018 and 2026.

"Hospitals are important economic drivers in Ohio," said Tim Colburn, president and CEO of Berger Health System in Circleville. "In Pickaway County, like many rural counties, the local hospital is one of the largest employers. The ACA has strengthened Berger Health System by reducing the financial burden of providing care for the uninsured."

The ACA has provided Ohio with a significant chunk of revenue. Without it, Ohio loses \$3.5 billion in federal Medicaid funding in 2019. By 2028, those losses grow to \$42.2 billion.

"Losing ACA will be painful and we must protect it," Patton said. "There is no plan for a replacement. It's a dangerous situation for Ohio."

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Policy Matters Ohio is a nonprofit, nonpartisan state policy research institute with offices in Cleveland and Columbus.

