



# New York State COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

## **PROPOSED REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT**

*“Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhuman.” The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

The New York State Council of Churches joins our partner denominations to signal our grave concern about the proposed repeal of the Affordable Care Act. Repeal, coupled with an inadequate replacement plan, may usher in a very large pastoral care crisis. Bankruptcies, loss of life, untreated illness, unaffordable Medicare, lack of access to nursing homes, over extended small business owners, severe cuts in Medicaid, and closing of rural hospitals may be just a few of the potential stresses faced by parishioners and their surrounding communities.

Health Care for All New York describes what citizens could lose if the ACA is repealed: [Please visit this link](#) to read the document.

There are plans circulating to repair the ACA. However, the proposals will likely result in fewer people having insurance or making that insurance prohibitively expensive. It’s crucial that Members of Congress be asked to be much more specific about their proposals and to show how what they are proposing will be a true improvement.

If you are concerned that you and your neighbor’s health care could be compromised, we urge you to please be in touch with your Member of Congress and ask them to specifically address your concerns. Phone calls, visits to offices, and requests for meetings are possibilities. Some Members of Congress have scheduled town meetings. Many others have refused to do so and need to be encouraged. It’s very important that you reach out to your community and meet people who have a story to tell and could lose so much. [Please click here](#) for a tool kit with guidance on what to say and do.

In addition, here are ten sample questions you could ask your Member of Congress about any replacement bill they are proposing:

1. Will everyone who has coverage today still have coverage under your bill?
2. Will your bill lower the cost of healthcare premiums and deductibles, while keeping the same benefits?
3. Under your bill, will tax credits for health insurance continue at the same amount or more?
4. Will your bill keep current protections for people with preexisting conditions?
5. Under your bill, can a woman be charged more simply because she is a woman?

6. Will your bill fully cover preventive care -- like mammograms -- at no cost? Will mental health care and prescription drugs be covered at the same level?
7. Will your bill let insurance companies charge people over 55 more?
8. Under this bill, will Medicaid coverage remain the same without increasing costs for seniors, children and people with disabilities?
9. Will this bill make sure that large employers provide health coverage for their workers?
10. Will this bill cut taxes for drug companies and the very wealthy?

[Please click here](#) to watch how one woman at a town meeting framed her question from a faith perspective to a Member of Congress.

## **TOWN MEETINGS AND FORUMS**

If you want to easily find out where town meetings and forums are happening in your area, [please click here](#). It's easy, just type in your zip code.

In addition to the above actions, we invite congregations to hold prayer vigils and forums on health care and other issues (ie, immigration, taxation, allocation of resources). You may want to collaborate with other religious institutions. Don't forget mosques and synagogues. You could invite, of course, your Member of Congress, but consider other speakers including hospital administrators, local government officials, Assembly people and State Senators and/or academics who study these issues. We also urge you to post notices of your event by [clicking this link](#) so that others may be encouraged to attend. It's a good opportunity for your congregation to reach out to your community.

Most mainline denominations have taken positions on the Affordable Care Act and are urging you to be in touch with your Member of Congress. [Please click here](#) for a review of positions developed by religious organizations across the country:

If you would like to explore other ways you can advocate for the health and well being of your congregation and community, please be in touch with The Reverend Peter Cook, Executive Director, New York State Council of Churches [Pcook@nyscoc.org](mailto:Pcook@nyscoc.org) or 508-380-8289 (Mobile).

## **MISSION AND PURPOSE OF THE NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

*With a spirit of ecumenism and hospitality, the New State Council of Churches works with 8 partner Protestant denominations and approximately 7,000 congregations to live into God's call to do justice and to love your neighbor.*

*We point to the Kingdom of God on earth where the marginalized are freed from poverty, where prisoners can be restored to live happier and healthier lives, and where we help young people grow in their Christian discipleship.*

Remember to [visit our website](#), we value your partnership in ministry with us. The New York State Council of Churches relies on contributions to carry out its ministry, [please donate](#). Also, [like us on facebook](#) and [follow us on twitter](#).