



April 10, 2017

Member Organizations

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National Association of Black Social Workers, Inc.
Howard University School of Law
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National Dental Association
National Black Caucus of State Legislators
Association of Black Sociologists
National Black Nurses Association, Inc.
National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice
National Black Alcoholism & Addictions Council, Inc.
Black Administrators in Child Welfare, Inc.
Association of Black Health-System Pharmacists
National Medical Association
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National Alliance of Black School Educators
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Thurgood Marshall Action Coalition
National Historically Black Colleges & Universities Substance Abuse Consortium, Inc.
National Association of Health Services Executives
Human Resources Development Institute, Inc. (HRDI)
"Concerned Black Men National"
100 Black Men of America, Inc.

Honorable Mitchell McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell

Dear Mr. Speaker Ryan

The National African American Drug Policy Coalition, Inc. principal mission is to advocate, educate and to promote position changes in our healthcare system to eliminate disparate access and treatment and unlawful discrimination to persons afflicted with drug dependency and addiction and related mental health issues. Our objective is to bring about reforms in the juvenile and criminal justice systems which result from the usage and trafficking in illegal drugs and abuse of prescription drugs and related crime and violence involved in this Nation as a result.

From the very beginning of our existence we have strongly advocated for a medical and public health approach to these problems rather than reliance on the juvenile delinquency and criminal justice approach in resolving these problems for the Nation resulting in the economic costs of Mass Incarceration in the law enforcement, judicial involvement, and the penal correction approaches with the heavy costs involved to the States and the Federal governments. Thus, in making changes to the present healthcare system we urge you and all the Members of Congress to consider the increased costs to law enforcement, the legal and judicial systems, and the cost of incarceration.

Specifically, we are strongly concerned with the Congressional Budget Office's projection that some 24 Million people will be denied health insurance coverage under the proposed changes to the Affordable Care Act over the next 10 years. We view this Office as a neutral non-political entity. To us, this would greatly increase the number of individuals in this country living under poverty standards rather than bringing persons out of poverty in this Nation and increasing the quality of life for everyone. We are concerned greatly about the increased costs to hospitals and the emergency medical care they will be called upon to give without compensation and the greatly increased to Emergency Rooms to be absorbed by the medical system in the United States of America.

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Promoting Health and Justice

We are also concerned about increased crime and violence that can be reasonably anticipated by persons in bad health who will rob and steal and become involved in illegal drugs because of their medical conditions, or committing suicide, or dying younger and the lost of more productive years they could have had but for an inadequate healthcare system. Many of these people could remain in the workforce and pay taxes if they had access to adequate healthcare, who well might turn to selling and using illegal drugs or other underground employment activities which would be crimes

just to survive. In our view, Congress should weight these consideration rather than just look at our healthcare system in isolation in view of these strong considerations. If people remain healthy longer, work and add to our economic wellbeing, and pay taxes, the healthcare system which is adequate to meet their needs, this approach may greatly add to the quality of life in this Nation and its economic growth, quality of our workforce, and our very national security.

Congress must weigh the consequences and cost impact being proposed in our healthcare system as to how they will impact our other governmental costs and obligations such as dealing with the homeless, with all persons who may sink deeper into poverty, with inadequate medical care of our veterans, the strong potential for greater alcoholism and the use of illegal drugs to make their lives tolerable and the strong potential for increased crime and violence, and costs of increased arrests, court cases, and incarceration.

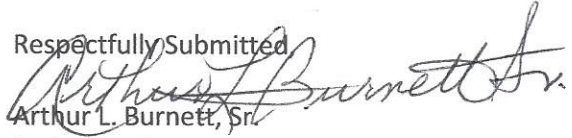
Finally, we want to emphasize that quality healthcare for our children must continue to be protected, and even enhanced, for they are our future both as to their quality of life over a lifetime, their productivity impacting the economic condition of this Nation in the future. Where from childhood their health issues are resolved, they can better educate themselves and they will be able to function in the workforce world in which they will live as adults, many more of them can become outstanding scientists and professionals and technologists and other experts in the fields our economic will demand if we are to remain competitive with the other Nations of the World. With excellent healthcare these children could be most productive individuals throughout their lives to greatly reducing crime and violence and solve the problems facing our Government today of 25 percent or more of our people living below the poverty line and becoming a more divided Nation than we are today.

In conclusion, the quality of healthcare we provide in this Nation is of the utmost importance as it lies at the very core of the abilities of our people to be outstanding in all of the other sectors of our Government. It is vital to all the other services with which we deal – family formation and support, education. a quality workforce, economic improvement for far more people and thus the reduction of poverty in this Nation, significant decrease in crime and violence and increase in public safety, and indeed our very national security.

Letter to Majority Leader Mitchell McConnell, U.S. Senate and Speaker of the House
Paul Ryan, U.S. House of Representatives, Dated April 10, 2017,
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While we deeply appreciate that a vote on the Affordable Care Act did not occur at the end of March 2017, we strongly urge that whatever Amendments and Reforms Congress may consider making to the Affordable Care Act in the future will contribute to the quality of healthcare provided to all persons residing within the United States of America from their birth and throughout their lives. This letter is submitted with the explicit strong approval of the Officers and Board of Directors of the National African American Drug Policy Coalition, Inc.

Respectfully Submitted


Arthur L. Burnett, Sr.

Retired Judge

Vice President of Administration