

July 26, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell:

As the Senate further considers health system reforms, I write on behalf of the American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) and our 52,000 members, to share our views.

As the amendment process continues, ASA encourages the Senate to adopt provisions that expand access to insurance coverage, including the extension of eligibility for tax credits to those Americans earning from zero to 350% of the Federal Poverty Line. ASA supports providing low income Americans access to a choice of health plan. ASA further supports provisions to enhance tax credits for younger individuals, and encourages the Senate to provide similar tax credits to allow older low income individuals to have access to health care coverage.

We commend the Senate for maintaining a robust employer-sponsored insurance system and encourage the Senate to avoid making changes to the employer sponsored insurance marketplace. ASA also supports the adoption of sufficient funding to address the current opioid epidemic.

ASA has serious reservations about provisions that would increase the number of uninsured individuals. We urge the Senate to carefully consider the implications of the loss of coverage to millions of Americans who have gained access to coverage under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), and the likely implications for access to preventive and routine care, resulting in significant increased costs and adverse outcomes associated with delayed care.

ASA is also concerned about waiver provisions that would allow states to opt out of the ten Essential Health Benefits (EHBs) established under the ACA. Access to anesthesia and pain relief measures for maternity care, for example, should be guaranteed to all Americans regardless of their domicile or health plan.

We appreciate the challenges facing the Senate, and stand ready to work with you to achieve needed health system reforms while maintaining access to affordable health care services for all Americans. Please contact Manuel Bonilla, ASA Chief Advocacy Officer, at m.bonilla@asahq.org or 202-289-2222 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Plagenhoef, M.D.
President
American Society of Anesthesiologists