

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

JAMES P. HOFFA
General President

25 Louisiana Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001



KEN HALL
General Secretary-Treasurer

202.624.6800
www.teamster.org

June 26, 2017

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 1.4 million members of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and their families, I urge you to vote to oppose the so-called “Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017.”

The Better Care Reconciliation Act will cause tens of millions to lose insurance coverage over the next decade. Rather than reducing the costs of health care, the legislation will simply shift costs to working Americans and their families while cutting taxes for the very wealthy and corporations.

The Teamsters have long opposed proposals to tax workers health benefits. This legislation retains the 40 percent excise tax on high quality health care plans, but repeals all other taxes that were included in the Affordable Care Act. It is unconscionable that our members will have to suffer this 40 percent penalty on their collectively bargained benefits, while the wealthy and corporations see their taxes repealed.

The bill also opens the door to the erosion or elimination of minimum coverage, the weakening of the ACA’s pre-existing condition protections, and allows insurers to charge older adults much higher premiums than under the ACA. Eliminating the employer mandate will weaken the landscape for employer-sponsored insurance.

The changes from the House passed bill do not change the fact that millions of American families will lose health insurance. When people lose health insurance, they still become ill or injured and they still seek treatment.

June 26, 2017
Page 2

Medical professionals and facilities are still required to treat individuals with medical emergencies regardless of their ability to pay under the EMTLA act of 1986, which often results in the health care provider not being compensated. As a consequence, hospitals and physicians have historically made up for this type of “uncompensated care” by charging employer-sponsored health plans, which cover 177 million Americans including our Teamster members, much more. The Senate should be looking for ways to strengthen the middle class instead of promoting policies that will ultimately take money from their hard earned paychecks and reduce, and make more costly, the health care benefits they receive.

Like its House counterpart, the so-called “Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017” is fatally flawed. Accordingly, I call on you to stand with American workers and their families and reject this legislation. Vote no on the “Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James P. Hoffa". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James P. Hoffa
General President