



May 31, 2017

FR: DSCC

TO: Interested Parties

RE: 2018 Health Care Dynamics Crystalize Against GOP Senate Candidates

As Senate Republicans move [forward](#) with their toxic healthcare agenda this week, the health care dynamics of the 2018 Senate campaigns are crystalizing: every GOP candidate will be held accountable for spiking costs by [20 percent](#), jeopardizing coverage for [pre-existing conditions](#) and charging older Americans an [\\$8,400 age tax](#). The only winners of their Plan are insurance CEOs and the richest few who get another taxpayer funded handout – but working people will be forced to pay more for less care.

Senate Republicans' secretive, go-it-alone process is out of step with voters' expectations, and it means the GOP will bear the full responsibility for the disastrous impact of their proposals.

As summer begins, here's the state of the health care dynamic and the 2018 Senate campaigns.

The polling: Republicans own health care and their plan is toxic with voters.

Recent polling from [Quinnipiac](#) revealed voters disapprove of the GOP health care plan 57-20 percent and only 20 percent of all voters say they are more likely to vote for a candidate who supports the GOP health care plan. [Fox News](#) reported that 44 percent of working class white voters oppose **the GOP's proposals**. And [Garin-Hart-Yang Research Group](#) found that roughly 80 percent of voters now say President Trump and Republicans bear responsibility for the health care system – meaning **the GOP's effort to [sabotage](#) America's health insurance system** is also set to backfire.

In analysis prepared for the DSCC by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, three facts on health care resonate with voters in battleground states:

1. *Republicans will raise out-of-pocket costs with higher premiums, deductibles, and the cost of prescription drugs.*
2. *People with pre-existing conditions will lose protection and can lose coverage.*
3. *Republicans impose an age tax on older Americans, forcing them to pay premiums as much as five times higher than what others pay.*

Additionally, the unified opposition from those who know health care the best – including the AARP, American Medical Association, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and the American Hospital Association – is a strong proof point against the **GOP's** proposal. As Garin-Hart-Yang found, 73 percent of voters surveyed earlier this month are more likely to believe these groups than Republican leadership, including President Trump and Speaker Ryan.

Republican candidates cannot escape their support for spiking costs & stripping coverage – not to mention sabotaging the current system rather than making insurance more affordable.

Virtually every potential GOP Senate candidate – from members of Congress to state office holders like Rick Scott (FL) – are [on the record](#) and often have been caught on [video-tape](#) praising their **party's toxic health care agenda**.

Members of the House who have announced or are eyeing Senate bids – like Congressmen Rokita (IN), Messer (IN), Kelly (PA), Barletta (PA), Jenkins (WV), Mooney (WV), Cramer (ND) and Congresswomen Hartzler (MO) and Wagner (MO) – all voted for the Plan and are uniquely vulnerable. If he decides to run Congressman Upton (MI) will also face [special liabilities](#) over his central role in stripping coverage away for pre-existing conditions.

Many of these potential candidates aren't just out-of-step with voters – they're also [at odds](#) with the Republican senator or governor in their own home states.

Voters expectations for the Senate are clear: an open, bipartisan process that results in lower costs and better coverage. But Republicans, including Senators Heller and Flake, are failing to meet this test – meeting in [secret](#) and [refusing to work with Democrats](#) on any proposal. Sen. Flake has already [endorsed the bill's dramatic cuts to Medicaid, and leaked audio revealed that](#), behind closed doors, Sen. Heller has **said he'd do whatever it takes to [vote for](#) the GOP's health care plan.**

And even if the dangerous Republican health care plan fails to become law, the [GOP is purposefully sabotaging the current system](#). **Here's what an [insurance company CEO](#) told Vox about raising premiums by 22.9 percent:**

"The biggest single reason for that rate increase is the lack of the federal funding for CSRs in 2018. We cannot assume nor should we that the money is going to be there based on what we know today. The president and the administration have made several statements about CSRs that don't give any comfort that they will be available.

"If we'd had those assurances [that the subsidies would be paid], our rate would have been 8.8 percent. You can do the math and see the delta there."

The uncertainty caused by the Republican health plan, GOP leaders in Congress and the White House drove an insurer to raise rates a staggering 14.1 percent more than they would have. Once again, data from [Garin-Hart-Yang](#) shows that **"a large majority of voters will hold President Trump responsible" for what happens to health care** – and that is bad news for Republican candidates across the country.

In the months ahead, the DSCC will continue holding Republicans accountable.

The DSCC has launched an aggressive effort to hold announced and potential GOP Senate candidates accountable for their toxic health care agenda, and we will continue our efforts as the Senate pursues its secret and partisan efforts to spike health care costs for working families throughout the summer.

The DSCC first launched its 30-second health care ad, "[The Price](#)," – **described as "[gut punch of an ad](#)" by MSNBC's Rachel Maddow** – in March alongside a health care [website](#). During the April recess the DSCC released targeted [Google search advertisements](#) highlighting potential GOP Senate **candidates' support for the Plan. And most recently, the DSCC [launched](#) 6-second, non-skippable YouTube ads in 9 battleground states** – becoming the [first national campaign committee](#) to utilize YouTube's innovative bumper ad format during the 2018 campaign cycle.

Health care is already a dominant issue for voters across the country, and continues to emerge as a defining, overwhelming obstacle for the GOP during the 2018 Senate campaign cycle. As Republicans return home for recess or flee behind closed doors in Washington, our message is simple: GOP Senate candidates cannot hide from their toxic health care agenda, and we look forward to joining with voters to hold them responsible.

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