

Key aspects of GOP health plans unpopular with battleground voters

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Some of the provisions that form the core of pending federal health-reform legislation are deeply unpopular in seven battleground states, according to polls of registered voters commissioned by the AMA.

Voters showed widespread support for the traditional Medicaid program that helps poor American adults and 37 million children access care. A majority of poll respondents want Medicaid funding to be increased or maintained at current levels, with those supporting cuts ranging from a minority of 9 percent to 17 percent.

Majorities of those polled in Alaska, Colorado, Nevada, Ohio and West Virginia were opposed to eliminating or reducing federal funding for the expanded version of Medicaid that has enabled millions of low-income Americans to gain insurance coverage in recent years.

The AMA yesterday announced its opposition to the Senate's Better Care Reconciliation Act (BCRA), based on the Association's health-system reform objectives, principally that reform legislation should not result in currently insured people losing their coverage.

"If either the House or Senate health reform bill were to become law, not only would millions of Americans lose their insurance coverage, but many more would have higher—perhaps unaffordable—deductibles and co-payments that will discourage them from seeking the care they need," said AMA President David O. Barbe, MD.

"These polls of voters from states across the country show that the proposed Medicaid cuts hit home, affecting many respondents directly and imperiling access to care. Americans are not only overwhelmingly opposed to the current reform proposals, but they are opposed to many of the major provisions on which they are built," he said.

“Both the Senate and House bills, as currently drafted, violate the important principle ‘first, do no harm,’” Dr. Barbe added. “It is clear that changes are needed to our health system and that a bipartisan approach is necessary to achieve those results. Americans agree that the proposals currently before Congress are a massive step in the wrong direction.”

The poll also found that the House-passed American Health Care Act (AHCA)—whose major provisions are also found in the Senate proposal—is massively unpopular. No more than 26 percent of voters supported the AHCA in any of the seven states whose voters were surveyed.

Read more about the AMA's comprehensive vision for health-system reform, refined over more than two decades by the AMA House of Delegates, which is composed of representatives of more than 190 state and national specialty medical associations.

You can further explore the AMA's health reform objectives at [Patientsbeforepolitics.org](https://patientsbeforepolitics.org), an online platform designed to educate and engage patients and physicians on the current debate. The site makes it easy for patients and physicians to write their elected Congressional representatives and urge them to protect Americans' access to quality care.

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