



Senate Health Care Bill Would Not Sufficiently Protect Patients with Pre-Existing Conditions

WASHINGTON, D.C., September 4, 2018 — *More than 25 patient and consumer groups representing millions of people with pre-existing health conditions issued the following statement regarding S. 3388, the Ensuring Coverage for Patients with Pre-Existing Conditions Act introduced on August 23rd, 2018.*

“Our organizations are pleased that the sponsors of this legislation recognize the importance of protecting access to health insurance coverage for people with pre-existing conditions. Like the bill’s drafters, we acknowledge that the *Texas v. U.S.* lawsuit poses a real threat to the millions of patients and consumers with serious and chronic conditions represented by our organizations. Americans need access to affordable and adequate healthcare coverage to manage and maintain their health. We are encouraged that the sponsors of this bill recognize that Congressional action will be needed to address the damaging impact on our patients if the court invalidates vital protections in current law.

“We appreciate that this legislation would prohibit the denial of coverage and rating based on health status. However, it would not ban pre-existing condition exclusions and would remove rating restrictions based on age, gender, tobacco use, or occupation. This means that many individuals could still face higher premiums and out-of-pocket costs and, even if enrollees paid the increased premiums for many months, they could still be denied benefits because of a pre-existing condition. In short, this bill would not replace critical protections in current law if the court rules unfavorably for patients and consumers in *Texas v. U.S.* This is not acceptable for the patients we represent.

“Patients and their families rely on the comprehensive protections included in the Affordable Care Act to access important, life-sustaining and life-improving health care. Our groups remain committed to working with Congress to ensure that any legislation promising to protect people with pre-existing conditions meet the principles set by our organizations that guarantee that health care is affordable, adequate and accessible – no matter the ultimate outcome of this lawsuit.”

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Adult Congenital Heart Association
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Diabetes Association
American Heart Association
American Liver Foundation
American Lung Association
Arthritis Foundation
Chronic Disease Coalition
Crohn’s & Colitis Foundation
Cystic Fibrosis Foundation
Epilepsy Foundation
Family Voices
Hemophilia Federation of America
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society
Lutheran Services in America
March of Dimes
Muscular Dystrophy Association
National Alliance on Mental Illness
National Health Council
National Hemophilia Foundation
National Kidney Foundation
National Multiple Sclerosis Society
National Organization for Rare Disorders
National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Psoriasis Foundation
Susan G. Komen
United Way Worldwide
WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease