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The mission of the American College of Cardiology and the American College of Cardiology Foundation is to transform cardiovascular care and improve heart health.

July 25, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, and Members of the United States Senate:

On behalf of the American College of Cardiology (ACC) and its member clinicians providing cardiovascular care to citizens across the country, we ask that you and your colleagues prioritize patient access to care in any effort to reform our health care system.

In light of recent analysis from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), it is clear that the health reform approaches being contemplated in the Senate, whether the Better Care Reconciliation Act or the Obamacare Repeal Reconciliation Act, would result in the loss of insurance coverage for millions of Americans, limiting access to care for those who need it most.

The ACC opposes these approaches to health reform. Instead, we urge Senators on both sides of the aisle to work in an open, bipartisan process to advance reforms that align with the ACC's Principles for Health Reform. These principles prioritize patient access to meaningful insurance coverage and protection for individuals with pre-existing conditions, goals that would advance the outcome we all strive for: a health care system that strengthens and secures the highest quality care for all Americans.

The ACC adopted these principles to guide our engagement and highlight the key components of legislation to strengthen and improve health care in America.

- Expand access to and prevent loss of health care coverage through public and private programs.
- Guarantee access to affordable coverage options for patients with cardiovascular disease or other pre-existing medical conditions.
- Improve access to and coverage of preventive care and expand the nation's investment in research, prevention, public health, and disease surveillance.
- Continue and build upon policies to promote usability and interoperability of health information technology to improve patient care and outcomes.
- Maintain commitment to patient-centered, evidence-based care and reverse the trends toward decreased personal contact between the patient and the physician/care team.
- Emphasize professionalism, transparency, and the collaborative clinician-patient relationship to improve quality and promote better outcomes.
- Foster collaborative development, testing, and expansion of models that promote and reward value, team-based care, and shared decision making through the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) and other entities.
- Minimize barriers to the delivery of efficient, high-quality cardiovascular care in all practice settings.

To that end, I ask you and your colleagues to prioritize coverage and protection for the most vulnerable Americans as health reform efforts move forward. The ACC and its members in every state will continue to work with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to promote solutions that maintain patient access to the coverage and care they need.

Thank you for your consideration. I offer myself and the ACC staff as a resource to you if you would like to discuss this further.

Sincerely,



Mary Norine Walsh, MD, FACC
President, American College of Cardiology

Cc: Members of the United States Senate