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VETO MESSAGE ON H.R. 3762

MESSAGE

FROM

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

TRANSMITTING

NOTIFICATION OF THE VETO OF H.R. 3762, THE "RECONCILIATION ACT"

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To the House of Representatives:

I am returning herewith without my approval H.R. 3762, which provides for reconciliation pursuant to section 2002 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2016, herein referred to as the Reconciliation Act. This legislation would not only repeal parts of the Affordable Care Act, but would reverse the significant progress we have made in improving health care in America. The Affordable Care Act includes a set of fairer rules and stronger consumer protections that have made health care coverage more affordable, more attainable, and more patient centered. And it is working. About 17.6 million Americans have gained health care coverage as the law's coverage provisions have taken effect. The Nation's uninsured rate now stands at its lowest level ever, and demand for Marketplace coverage during December 2015 was at an all-time high. Health care costs are lower than expected when the law was passed, and health care quality is higher—with improvements in patient safety saving an estimated 87,000 lives. Health care has changed for the better, setting this country on a smarter, stronger course.

The Reconciliation Act would reverse that course. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the legislation would increase the number of uninsured Americans by 22 million after 2017. The Council of Economic Advisers estimates that this reduction in health care coverage could mean, each year, more than 900,000 fewer people getting all their needed care, more than 1.2 million additional people having trouble paying other bills due to higher medical costs, and potentially more than 10,000 additional deaths. This legislation would cost millions of hard-working middle-class families the security of affordable health coverage they deserve. Reliable health care coverage would no longer be a right for everyone: it would return to being a privilege for a few.

The legislation's implications extend far beyond those who would become uninsured. For example, about 150 million Americans with employer-based insurance would be at risk of higher premiums and lower wages. And it would cause the cost of health coverage for people buying it on their own to skyrocket.

The Reconciliation Act would also effectively defund Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood uses both Federal and non-federal funds to provide a range of important preventive care and health services, including health screenings, vaccinations, and check-ups to millions of men and women who visit their health centers annually. Longstanding Federal policy already prohibits the use of Federal funds for abortions, except in cases of rape or incest or when the life of the woman would be endangered. By eliminating Federal Medicaid funding for a major provider of health care, H.R. 3762 would limit access to health care for men, women, and families

across the Nation, and would disproportionately impact low-income individuals.

Republicans in the Congress have attempted to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act over 50 times. Rather than refighting old political battles by once again voting to repeal basic protections that provide security for the middle class, Members of Congress should be working together to grow the economy, strengthen middle-class families, and create new jobs. Because of the harm this bill would cause to the health and financial security of millions of Americans, it has earned my veto.

BARACK OBAMA.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *January 8, 2016.*

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