



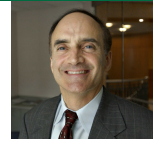
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ACA Repeal Would Devastate Jobs and Economy

By Robert Weiner



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By Robert Weiner and Zachary Filtz

If Trump kills or diminishes the ACA, as he's trying to do, he'll lose his best talking point, national jobs growth. Despite ACA opponents' claims of "job killing" by the bill, the facts show that the 30 million new recipients and expanded benefits for 100+ million have generated exactly the opposite, big jobs increases -- and that's just common sense.

With repeal, in Arizona, 160,456 citizens would drop off of the Marketplace health plan they are on. Arizona's employment rate would drop by 1.6%, and 41,982 Arizona jobs would be lost alone, according to the Economic Policy Institute. Nationally, 1,175,524 people would lose their jobs if the ACA were voided.

For everyone and especially Arizonans, an important item at stake for ACA's future is the 2020 special election for Senate seat that Republican Martha McSally currently occupies. That seat was once held by John McCain, who gave his party-defying "thumbs down" to repealing and replacing the ACA on July 28, 2017. That seat now sees Martha McSally running against Democrat Mark Kelly.

Kelly's website speaks of supporting the existing ACA while introducing a public health option for all Arizonans.

But McSally has a nuanced position on the ACA. A campaign ad says she is "leading the fight to cover pre-existing conditions." She has indeed offered helpful amendments to Republican-led replacement bills that moved the ball on their pre-existing conditions language. But as a House member in 2015 and 2017, she voted to repeal and replace the ACA with a "skinny repeal."

According to PolitiFact Arizona, the Republican "skinny repeal" bills "raised premiums." Because McSally ultimately voted with her party, PolitiFact rated her claim "mostly false."

Kelly, on the other hand, speaks about ending threats keeping coverage for the 400,000 Arizonans receiving insurance through Medicaid expansion.

Every state plus D.C. would see job losses if the ACA were repealed. Thirty states would see increases of statewide unemployment rates of around 1%. The states that would be hit the hardest, with effects of up to 4%, are Montana, Rhode Island, Oregon, New Jersey, West Virginia, Kentucky, Arizona, and New Mexico.

The 30 million new health insurance recipients, plus 100 million covered people with pre-existing conditions, have created the new jobs and are a reason the U.S. now has a 50-year-low 3.5% unemployment rate. Incidentally, the national unemployment rate for all workers at the height of the recession in March 2010, as the ACA became law, was 9.7%.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics national unemployment rate for the health care services industry is just 2.4%. In 2010, it was more than double that, 5%.

In March 2017, Goldman Sachs found that a "substantial decline in insurance coverage would also likely be associated with a drag on health care employment and consumption." In other words, the fewer insured there are, the fewer workers have jobs. The BLS calculated that there were 16,793,100 health care employees in March 2010, the month that President Obama signed the ACA. As of Sept. 2019, there are 20,576,200 health employees.

A decade ago, there were 2.4 million more workers in retail than health care. In 2017, health care surpassed both retail and manufacturing, according to the BLS. There will be 3.4 million more health care services jobs by 2028. links? Health care services has grown to be the largest sector of the U.S. labor force.

Arizona is among twenty states with GOP-controlled governors or attorneys general. A Texas ruling, *Texas v. United States*, with support from the Republican Party, is headed for the Supreme Court via the Fifth Court of Appeals. This ruling would cancel the coverage for all who receive benefits from it, as would seriously jeopardize all of the jobs that have been created by it.

President Trump markets his presidency as a catalyst for job generation, but if the Texas case or Congress moves against the ACA, jobs and the economy will spiral downward. Senator John McCain before his death gave the famous thumbs down that saved the ACA from "skinny repeal" by one vote. The Arizona Senate race matters.

Robert Weiner was a Clinton and Bush White House spokesman, Chief of Staff of the House Aging Committee and Health Subcommittee, spokesman for the House Government Operations Committee, and senior staff for Congressmen John Conyers, Charles Rangel, Claude Pepper, Ed Koch and Sen. Edward Kennedy. Zachary Filtz is a Policy Analyst for Robert Weiner Associates and Solutions for Change.