

DEMOCRATS WORKING FOR HEALTH CARE

Nothing is more critical to the well-being of Americans than quality, affordable healthcare and Democrats are committed to delivering that for Page County and all of America.

The most significant advancement in the quest for universal healthcare is the Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”), passed by Congress in 2010 and signed into law by President Obama. This transcendent piece of legislation expands coverage by providing subsidies to make it possible for more people to gain health coverage and to protect people with pre-existing conditions who previously were unable to qualify for health insurance. The ACA also mandates a set of core benefits that must be provided by all health insurance plans. More than 20 million previously uninsured Americans have obtained medical coverage due to the ACA.¹

While the Trump Administration and Republicans in Congress seek to undermine the ACA, Democrats on the local, state and national level want to preserve it and enhance it, including adding an affordable “public option” for anyone who prefers it.

Access to affordable health care is more important than ever, as the Covid-19 pandemic upends normal life and continues to threaten our population. Even as some 30 million Americans have lost their employer-based health coverage during the pandemic,² the Trump Administration and 18 Republican state attorneys continue to petition the Supreme Court to eliminate the ACA without any replacement in sight.³

Even Senator John Cornyn (R, Texas)—who has long been an enemy of the ACA—concedes the value of the ACA during the pandemic. In an interview this past spring, he encouraged Americans who lost coverage during the pandemic to sign up for the Affordable Care Act, saying, “The good news is that if you lose your employer-provided coverage, which covers about 180 million Americans, then that is a

¹“Since Obamacare Became Law, 20 Million More Americans Have Gained Health Insurance”. *Fortune*, November 18, 2018.

² “Eligibility for ACA Health Coverage Following Job Loss”. Kaiser Family Foundation, May 13, 2020. <https://www.kff.org/coronavirus-covid-19/issue-brief/eligibility-for-aca-health-coverage-following-job-loss/>

³ “Trump Reiterates Support To Kill ACA—Despite Pandemic,” *HealthcareDrive*, May 6, 2020. <https://www.healthcaredrive.com/news/trump-reiterates-support-to-kill-aca-despite-pandemic-as-house-states/577514/>

significant life event, which makes you then eligible to sign up for the Affordable Care Act — and as you know, it has a sliding scale of subsidies up to 400 percent of poverty.”⁴

Last year, President Donald Trump promised Americans a health plan that will be “[phenomenal](#)” and make the GOP “[the party of health care](#).”^{5 6} But, of course, that is just another one of his many broken promises. Neither President Trump nor his Republican Party have enacted—or even formally proposed—any comprehensive national health plan. No health plan is hardly a “phenomenal” health plan. More recently, during an interview with Chris Wallace of FOX news on July 19, 2020, Trump promised a healthcare plan in “two weeks”⁷ So far, there has been no sign of that plan either.

On a more local level, after making significant gains in the Virginia legislature during the 2017 elections, Democrats and Governor Northam (D, Virginia) passed Medicare expansion in 2018. Although our State Senator Mark Obenshain (R, District 26) opposed it, the expansion extended health coverage to more than 380,000 Virginians⁸ and over 10,000 residents in our senate district, including Page County citizens.⁹

Senator Mark Warner, our senior US Senator, is a strong advocate for better healthcare. He fights relentlessly to keep coverage in place for Americans with pre-existing conditions—conditions like cancer, diabetes or other illnesses that otherwise would allow health insurance companies to deny coverage to the people who need it most. He

⁴ San Antonio Current, May 15, 2020, at <https://www.sacurrent.com/the-aily/archives/2020/05/15/obamacare-opponent-john-cornyn-now-tells-people-who-lost-health-coverage-to-sign-up-for-the-program>.

⁵ “Trump says he will roll out new health care plan in next couple of months.” *The Hill*, June 15, 2019. <https://thehill.com/homenews/administration/448829-trump-says-he-will-roll-out-new-health-care-plan-in-next-couple-of> (Retrieved August 19, 2020)

⁶ “Trump: Republicans will be the party of healthcare” *Politico*, March 26, 2019. <https://www.politico.com/story/2019/03/26/trump-republicans-health-care-1237655> (Retrieved August 19, 2020)

⁷ Transcript: ‘Fox News Sunday’ interview with President Trump”. FOX News, July 19, 2020. <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/transcript-fox-news-sunday-interview-with-president-trump>

⁸ “2020 Medicaid at a Glance”. Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Programs. [https://www.dmas.virginia.gov/files/links/221/2019%20MAG%20Draft%20\(01.07.2019\).pdf](https://www.dmas.virginia.gov/files/links/221/2019%20MAG%20Draft%20(01.07.2019).pdf)

⁹ “By the Numbers: Medicaid Expansion in Each Va. Legislative District”. The Commonwealth Institute. <https://www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org/2017/03/28/by-the-numbers-medicaid-expansion-in-each-va-legislative-district/>

has fought against “junk” insurance plans, which—contrary to the ACA—allow insurers to sell policies with few benefits. He continues to fight against opioids and fight for more medical research, more mental health services and better coordination among federal, state and local authorities to fight drug trafficking. He has fought to allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies—to keep our costs down—and to provide funding for rural hospitals.

Our Democratic candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives, Nicholas Betts, is passionate about providing Americans with quality, affordable healthcare. He advocates allowing Americans to keep their private insurance if they wish, but to provide a low-cost public option that is available to all Americans, regardless of their socioeconomic status.¹⁰

Quality and affordable healthcare also requires that Democrats continuously defend the Medicare and Medicaid programs. In contrast, Donald Trump’s 2021 budget proposed drastic cuts to both Medicare and Medicaid.^{11 12 13}

You can see Democrats working for a healthy America in terms of our environment, too—the air we breathe, the water we drink, the places we work. The Trump Administration has made all these hazardous to our health. The Administration has loosened or gutted regulations designed to limit toxic emissions from industrial polluters, sewage treatment plants and energy plants; to limit air pollution in national parks and wilderness areas; to limit smog; to limit pesticides linked to developmental disabilities

¹⁰ <https://www.bettsforcongress.com/>

¹¹ “Trump’s 2021 Budget Would Cut \$1.6 Trillion From Low-Income Programs”. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, March 9, 2020. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/federal-budget/trumps-2021-budget-would-cut-16-trillion-from-low-income-programs> (Retrieved August 20, 2020).

¹² “What Seniors Need To Know About Trump’s 2021 Federal Budget”. Forbes, February 10, 2020. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/elenabotella/2020/02/10/what-seniors-need-to-know-about-trumps-2021-federal-budget/#439aadd38426>. (Retrieved August 20, 2020).

¹³ “The Trump Budget for 2020: A Budget Of, By, and For the 1%”. United States Senate Budget Committee. <https://www.budget.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/SBC%20Trump%20Budget%20Reaction%202-11-20%20REVISED.pdf> (Retrieved August 20, 2020)

in children; and to limit risks to health and safety in workplaces.¹⁴ This will result in poorer health for everyone else—including Page County residents.

In stark contrast to Trump’s attempts to dismantle healthcare and his gross mismanagement of the Covid-19 pandemic, Democrats are working for healthcare on both the local and national level. For your own sake—and for your family, your children, your grandchildren and our County’s future—please vote for healthcare.

¹⁴ “The Trump Administration Is Reversing 100 Environmental Rules. Here’s the Full List.” *New York Times*, July 2020. <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/climate/trump-environment-rollbacks.html> (Retrieved August 19, 2020)