



October 25, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
United States Senate  
455 Dirksen Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
United States Senate  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators:

On behalf of the Epilepsy Foundation, I am writing in support of the recent bipartisan health care discussions and the resulting legislation – the Bipartisan Health Care Stabilization Act of 2017 — which would help bring much-needed certainty to the ACA Marketplace.

Previous proposals to address the individual and small group markets and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would have significantly harmed millions of Americans by radically restructuring federal funding for the Medicaid program and undermining many of the patient protections created by the ACA. Further, traditional Senate process and regular order were ignored during discussions of each of the previous proposals.

The Epilepsy Foundation is hopeful that your bipartisan proposal would ensure meaningful access to care for people with epilepsy and other complex chronic conditions. We have been encouraged by the hearings in the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and hope the Senate will continue to work across the aisle to stabilize the current ACA Marketplace and improve health care access overall.

The Epilepsy Foundation is the leading national voluntary health organization that speaks on behalf of at least 3.4 million Americans with epilepsy and seizures. We foster the wellbeing of children and adults affected by seizures through research programs, educational activities, advocacy, and direct services. Epilepsy is a medical condition that produces seizures affecting a variety of mental and physical functions. Approximately 1 in 26 Americans will develop epilepsy at some point in their lifetime.

Tens of millions of people, including many with epilepsy, gained access to comprehensive and more affordable health care with enactment and implementation of the ACA. Individuals who previously faced considerable challenges when trying to obtain quality health care coverage were finally able to see a physician and afford medical care, including medications, for complex chronic conditions.

The Bipartisan Health Care Stabilization Act of 2017 would help bring much-needed certainty to the ACA Marketplace. Extending cost-sharing reduction payments for two years would help ensure that beneficiaries with lower incomes are able to afford co-pays and deductibles. Cost-sharing reduction payments and premium subsidies are important aspects of the overall structure of the ACA.

Further, the bill would give states more flexibility to structure their individual and small groups markets. The ACA already allows states to apply for waivers; however, this bill would streamline the process, reduce some of the requirements, and allow for more funding flexibility. While giving states some freedom to create a new structure for health care coverage has the potential to lead to more successful markets tailored for the needs of a particular state, it is critical that individuals with pre-existing conditions are considered and protected in these efforts. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) needs to ensure appropriate protections remain in place so that individuals with significant health needs are still able to get affordable, comprehensive insurance coverage.

Without appropriate health care, people living with epilepsy and chronic conditions are not able to live productive and fulfilling lives. We are greatly appreciative of the current bipartisan efforts and thank you for your support, willingness to work together, and commitment to improving health care for all Americans. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Angela Ostrom, Chief Legal Officer & Vice President Public Policy at [aostrom@efa.org](mailto:aostrom@efa.org) or 301-918-3766.

Sincerely,



Philip M. Gattone, M.Ed.  
President & CEO  
Epilepsy Foundation

cc: Sen. Baldwin  
Sen. Burr  
Sen. Carper  
Sen. Cassidy  
Sen. Collins  
Sen. Corker  
Sen. Donnelly  
Sen. Ernst  
Sen. Franken  
Sen. Graham  
Sen. Grassley  
Sen. Hassan  
Sen. Heitkamp  
Sen. Isakson  
Sen. King  
Sen. Klobuchar  
Sen. Manchin  
Sen. McCain  
Sen. McCaskill  
Sen. Murkowski  
Sen. Rounds  
Sen. Shaheen