

Affordable Care Act 2017 Timeline



The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, often shortened to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and nicknamed “Obamacare,” was signed into law by President Barack Obama on March 23, 2010. The history below explains the current legislative process to attempt to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act:

House Action

- **March 7, 2017 – House Republican leaders announced their plan to repeal and replace the ACA, introducing the American Health Care Act (AHCA).**
- March 12, 2017 – The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) releases its analysis of the AHCA, projecting that 52 million Americans would be left uninsured and insurance premiums would be higher through 2020.
- March 16, 2017 – The House Budget Committee voted 19 to 17 to send the AHCA to the Floor of the House. In passing it to the Floor, the committee recommended several changes to the bill.
- March 23, 2017 – Original scheduled date for the House vote for the GOP-crafted American Health Care Act. The AHCA was designed to need only a simple majority to pass the Senate using the budget reconciliation process. However after multiple long meetings aimed at brokering a compromise with hesitant conservatives, they failed to produce a resolution and therefore were unable to vote.
- March 24, 2017 – The AHCA was withdrawn from consideration by the House.
- April and May 2017 – Several amendments were drafted, including the MacArthur Amendment to appeal to the conservative House Freedom Caucus and the Upton Amendment to appeal to more moderate Republican members.
- **May 4, 2017 – House Republicans narrowly passed the American Health Care Act (AHCA) by a vote of 217 to 213.** The two new amendments swayed enough legislators to support it to pass. All 193 Democrats opposed the bill, alongside 20 Republicans — primarily moderates who thought the legislation rolls back health care benefits too much.

Senate Action

- May 9, 2017 – Senate working group created to draft their own version of the AHCA.
- June 19, 2017 – A draft bill was sent to the CBO for scoring.
- **June 22, 2017 – Senate Republicans released a draft of the Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017 (BCRA).**
- June 26, 2017 – The CBO releases its analysis of the BCRA, projecting that 15 million more Americans would be left uninsured in 2018 and 22 million more in 2026 than if the ACA continued. The Senate delayed voting on the BCRA until after the July 4th recess.
- July 13, 2017 – Significant amendments to the BCRA were proposed BCRA in an attempt to attract more votes by July 17. Opposition by several Republican Senators caused the voted to be delayed again.
- July 25, 2017 – The Senate voted on a “motion to proceed” that would allow limited debate on several proposals to repeal the Affordable Care Act. The motion passed with Vice President Mike Pence casting the deciding “yes” vote, breaking a 50 to 50 vote tie.

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Senate Action (cont.)

- July 26, 2017 – The Senate “Vote-O-Rama” begins, with dozens of bills and amendments introduced and voted down. Proposals that failed included: a revised version of the BCRA with more conservative amendments (vote of 43-57); a repeal-only proposal called the Obamacare Repeal Reconciliation Act (vote of 45-55); and a single payer bill (vote of 0-57).
- **July 27, 2017 – Senate Republican leadership releases the Health Care Freedom Act, also known as “skinny repeal.”** The “skinny repeal” would have removed the individual mandate and delayed the employer mandate, both of which would have spiked premiums by 20%. It did not make changes to Medicaid or CHIP.
- **July 28, 2017 – In the very early morning hours, the Senate voted down a scaled-back “skinny repeal” plan to overhaul the ACA by a vote of 49 – 51.** Senators Susan Collins (R-Maine), Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and John McCain (R-Arizona) joined Senate Democrats to defeat the measure.
- **September 13, 2017 –The Graham-Cassidy-Heller-Johnson bill (known as the Graham-Cassidy bill) to repeal and replace the ACA is introduced** by Sens. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) and Bill Cassidy (R-La.) with little time left before the September 30 parliamentary deadline to avoid a Democratic filibuster.
- **September 26, 2017 – After 3 Senate Republicans announce their opposition to the Graham – Cassidy bill, Senate Republican leadership announces they will not call it for a vote** before the September 30 deadline.

Trump Administration Action

- January 20, 2017 – President Trump signed the *“Executive Order Minimizing the Economic Burden of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act”* hours after being sworn in. The executive order instructs the secretary of health and human services and other agency heads to “waive, defer, grant exemptions from, or delay the implementation” of any part of the law that places a fiscal burden on the government, businesses or individuals.
- April 13, 2017 - Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) released the a rule that reduces the length of the 2018 open enrollment period from three months (November 1, 2017–January 31, 2018) to 45 days (November 1, 2017–December 15, 2017).
- August 31, 2017 – the Trump administration announced its decision to reduce spending on marketing for enrollment by 90%, spending only \$10 million in comparison to \$100 million in previous years. Funding for consumer enrollment assistance through the navigator programs will also be cut by 40%.
- October 12, 2017 – President Trump signed the *“Promoting Healthcare Choice and Competition Across the United States”* executive order. The order will allow small businesses more leeway to group together when providing or purchasing insurance, increase the availability and duration of short-term health insurance plans and widen the use of Health Reimbursement Arrangements, which let employers reimburse employees for health expenses rather than provide insurance themselves.
- October 12, 2017 – The Trump administration announced it would stop paying cost-sharing reduction payments; subsidies that help offset the cost to insurers of offering affordable plans to poor Americans.