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The Skanner Newspaper, established in October 1975, is a weekly publication, published every Wednesday by IMM Publications Inc.

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The Skanner is a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and West Coast Black Publishers Association.

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**COMING IN APRIL:
THE WAKE OF
VANPORT MOVIE
SCREENING AT
THE HOLLYWOOD
THEATRE**

Opinion

Speak Out to Protect Your Health Care Access

For six years, Republicans have repeated the same phrase in every conversation about healthcare: “repeal and replace” the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Now that Republicans control all levers of government, they are preparing legislation to strip 30 million Americans of the everyday security of health insurance.

The impact of any repeal would be massive and disastrous. Experts estimate that repealing the ACA will kill 43,000 Americans every year.

A disproportionate number of deaths will be from the African American community.

The ACA is the most significant piece of health equity legislation we’ve had in a generation. It reduced the number of African Americans living without health insurance by more than half.

We know that increased coverage has decreased the number of Americans dying from cancer.

A recent report by the American Cancer Society showed that cancer deaths have declined by 25 percent since peaking in 1991.

In their report, the American Cancer Society specifically notes that the ACA is driving “these shifts [that] should help to expedite progress in



Robin Kelly

Congress
Rep. Illinois
Dist. 2

reducing socioeconomic disparities in cancer, as well as other health conditions.”

The report also lauded the ACA for helping to decrease the “excess risk of cancer death” facing African Americans.

The ACA has also signifi-

“Thanks to the ACA, we are starting to see the mental healthcare gap between Blacks and Whites, close and more people are receiving the care they need to live healthy, productive lives

cantly expanded mental and behavioral treatment access, especially to community hospitals and schools. The Office of Minority Health notes that African Americans are 20 percent more likely to experience “serious mental health problems.” Yet, only a quarter of African Americans seek mental healthcare, compared to 40 percent of white Americans.

Thanks to the ACA, we are starting to see that gap close and more people are receiv-

ing the care they need to live healthy, productive lives.

We know that the ACA saving lives, so why are President Trump and Congressional Republicans so determined to repeal it?

This question is truly vexing when you consider the fact that, in addition to the tens of thousands of Americans who will die every year, we will also add trillions to the national debt and increase taxes.

According to the GOP’s budget resolution, repealing the ACA would add \$29.1 trillion

are skeptical of this proposal. Senator Bill Cassidy (R-La.), said: “It sounds like we are going to be raising taxes on the middle class in order to pay for these new credits.”

Now that we know the fact, we have a choice.

Do we allow President Trump and Congressional Republicans to undo President Obama’s legacy, imperiling and killing thousands of Americans by ripping away their health insurance or fight back.

To me, there is only one option. We fight back for our-

selves, our families and our community.

Here’s how to fight back: Add your Senators and Congressperson’s phone numbers to your speed dial or call the Congressional switchboard at 202.224.3121.

Remember, we work for you and Congress needs to hear from you!

Together, we can stop the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and stand up for our fellow Americans’ right to live a long, healthy life.

Will Federal Lawmakers Turn Back the Clock on Housing?

When future generations read the history of the nation’s first Black President, I believe there will be greater acknowledgement of his administration’s significant accomplishments. For now, however, an undeniable strategic war is underway to dismantle the very progress President Obama achieved.

General market media outlets have extensively reported on reforms or repeals of the Affordable Care Act, Wall Street reform and the future of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. It is equally important to share that a key Obama regulation that spoke to the future of fair housing is again under assault on Capitol Hill.

A 2015 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) rule finally delivered on the promises first made with the 1968 enactment of the Fair Housing Act. While the Act outlawed housing discrimination, it also included another important legal requirement. To advance the purposes of the Act, federal agencies and federal grantees were also to forge inclusive and diverse communities as a means to reverse America’s housing history of segregation and Jim Crow.

Known as “Affirmatively



Charlene Crowell

NNPA
Columnist

Furthering Fair Housing” (AFFH), the HUD rule requires that cities, counties and states receiving funds for housing and community development engage in

“A key Obama regulation, known as “Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing,” is again under assault on Capitol Hill

a planning process to help them take meaningful and deliberate actions to overcome historic segregation patterns, promote fair housing choice and create inclusive communities free from discrimination. Two HUD tools were shared to assist communities in the planning process, Data and Mapping and an Assessment of Fair Housing.

AFFH affects all public housing authorities and three other popular HUD programs: Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Emergency Solution Grants (ESG), and Housing Opportu-

nities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA).

From its beginning, HUD’s AFFH rule was met with attack and multiple legislative attempts to repeal it. The latest attempt is The Local Zoning Decisions Protection Act of 2017. If enacted, it would nullify the HUD rule. The bill would also ban federal funds from being used for any federal database that contains geospatial information on community racial disparities

gressive attempt yet to force his utopian ideology on American communities disguised under the banner of ‘fairness’. This overreaching mandate is an attempt to extort communities into giving up local zoning decisions and reengineer the makeup of our neighborhoods.”

For civil rights, housing and consumer advocates, the unique Black American experience was deliberately engineered—but from a different perspective: to deny housing opportunity, voting rights, economic mobility and even quality employment or education.

“AFFH is central to fulfilling the purposes of the Fair Housing Act,” said Wade Henderson, President and CEO on the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. “It’s based on a simple and perfectly fair premise: if a city or locality seeks taxpayer funding for HUD projects, they should actively work to ensure that all taxpayers can enjoy the benefits without the prospect of unlawful discrimination. Indeed, the rule provides local jurisdictions with broad discretion to decide which issues to prioritize and address.”

and disparities in access to affordable housing.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, the bill has already attracted 24 co-sponsors from 14 states. Half of the lawmakers’ support for the repeal comes from only four states: California, Florida, Tennessee and Texas. A companion bill was also introduced in the Senate with one co-sponsor.

Rep. Paul Gosar of Arizona, the bill lead sponsor in the lower chamber, shared why he feels so strongly about appealing the rule:

“The AFFH rule marks President Obama’s most ag-

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