

# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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## Health bills are 'destructive' to those with treatable conditions

Jun 28, 2017

The American Health Care Act passed by the House cuts Medicaid by \$834 billion. The Senate version, released after weeks of secrecy, appears equally destructive.

This will devastate a program that has worked well since 1965. As an endocrinologist, I see how Medicaid benefits patients, particularly those with diabetes. Contrary to current rhetoric, diabetes is not a choice, but is manageable with support.

Through Medicaid, a young man living in rural Missouri with autism and diabetes gets transportation to appointments, education services that allowed him to graduate, and medications that will help avoid amputations and kidney failure in his 40s.

A woman with Type 1 diabetes, which is fatal without access to insulin, can control her disease in pregnancy and have a healthy baby. Without insulin, she would be hospitalized with life-threatening complications and her baby would likely require an intensive care stay.

Investing in keeping people healthy makes more sense. Missouri already limits Medicaid to the sickest and lowest-income patients.

The Senate wants to pass cuts without public hearings, but the damage will not stay hidden. Our most vulnerable will lose health care. Families will suffer financial devastation, more will die of treatable conditions, and care will cost more if Congress doesn't support programs that prevent hospital stays and complications.

Sens. Roy Blunt and Claire McCaskill, please oppose cuts or caps to Medicaid to show you care about your constituents.

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