

Dozens protesting House vote on Obamacare repeal, replacement

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(West Plains) – Dozens of Howell County residents are protesting a possible House vote this week on the Republican replacement to the Affordable Care Act.

Members of the grassroots group Stand and Resist – Howell County are set up in downtown West Plains in front of the Howell County offices, and the office of Rep. Jason Smith (MO-8), from now until 6 pm Monday to protest the possible House vote, which they say would give huge tax breaks to the richest people in the country in exchange for higher insurance costs and less healthcare access for the poor and working poor.

(ORN)

One of those at the protest was Pat Hight, who was diagnosed with Stage 3A breast cancer in December 2002. She thanks Medicaid, along with the Howell County Health Department at the Ozarks Medical Center cancer treatment center, for saving her life:



She added that she was later diagnosed with metastatic breast cancer in 2014, and was able to have health insurance before getting on Medicare due to the “preexisting condition” clause in the Affordable Care Act.

She says now that she is on Medicare, she’s more worried about people who were like her and didn’t have coverage previously, calling it a life or death situation:



Rep. Smith has supported plans that would repeal the ACA, commonly known as Obamacare, and replacing that plan, citing soaring premium and plan costs for insurance.

The Republic healthcare plan, dubbed the American Health Care Act, could come up for a vote in the US House of Representatives this week. Proponents say the bill would lower the cost of coverage, while opponents say it will provide less coverage for those in the system. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office last week said the Republican replacement would increase the ranks of the uninsured by 14 million people next year alone, and 24 million over a decade.

Roughly 15 people were on hand at 11 am, with another 30-40 people scheduled to protest through the afternoon. Others are welcome to join, or to stop by for more information on the group or the plan.