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Affordable Care Act: 2017 saw increase in uninsured Missourians

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A new Gallup survey shows that the uninsured rate rose significantly in Missouri in 2017, a year marked by repeated attempts to repeal, sabotage, or weaken the health care programs and protections of the Affordable Care Act. Gallup attributes the dramatic increase in the number of uninsured Missourians to both the uncertainty created by repeated attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and the actual changes made by Congress and the Trump Administration.

"In 2017, we saw a sustained, multi-front attack on the programs that help Missourians access health care. Advocates and voters repeatedly warned our elected
officials that these actions would have real consequences for Missourians – and these numbers confirm it," said Jen Bersdale, Missouri Health Care for All's Executive Director.

Bersdale continues, "What is perhaps most heartbreaking is that in just one year, we lost more than half of the ground we had gained in the previous four years. From 2013-2016, as Missourians gained access to the Health Insurance Marketplace and the Affordable Care Act, the state's uninsured rate dropped by 3.4%. During 2017, the uninsured rate in Missouri rose by 2.1%. And of course, Missouri's uninsured rate was already higher than in other states because our state has not yet expanded Medicaid."

According to the Census Bureau, there were 6,113,532 people living in Missouri in 2017. The 2.1% increase in uninsured people means approximately 128,000 people lost their health insurance last year.

"When we talk about health care, we are always talking about real people," Bersdale says. "These are our parents, our brothers and sisters, our co-workers, and our neighbors. They are now at risk of complications from lack of regular care or financial devastation in the case of a major illness or injury. Our federal and state lawmakers need to remember these constituents and work to increase, not decrease, access to quality, affordable health care."