

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

https://www.stltoday.com/opinion/mailbag/keep-what-s-working-in-the-affordable-care-act/article_35d87496-51f1-5d4f-bfef-d9309fcac143.html

Keep what's working in the Affordable Care Act

Jul 10, 2018

SUBSCRIBE FOR 99 CENTS



In this Dec. 15, 2017 photo, the HealthCare.gov website is photographed in Washington. A new tally by The Associated Press finds that nearly 11.8 million Americans have signed up for coverage this year under former President Barack Obama's health care law. That's only about 3 percent less than last year, remarkably stable despite President Donald Trump's repeated efforts to repeal or undercut the program. The Affordable Care Act offers subsidized private health insurance to people who don't have coverage on the job. (AP Photo/Jon Elswick

As a registered nurse in St. Louis, I treat many patients with pre-existing conditions — from asthma and arthritis to diabetes and multiple sclerosis. Before the Affordable Care Act, insurance companies were allowed to discriminate against these patients, charging them exorbitant premiums or denying them coverage altogether.

That's why I'm alarmed that leaders in Washington, D.C., and here in Missouri are pursuing policies that would eliminate the ACA's protections for people with pre-existing conditions and go back to letting insurance companies discriminate. Instead of coming together to fix what's broken about the Affordable Care Act, they are trying to scrap it altogether.

The Affordable Care Act has benefited millions of Americans with pre-existing conditions — including many of my patients — who now have access to affordable health insurance. That means they can afford to see a doctor when they get sick, and access the preventive care and treatment to help them live longer, healthier and more productive lives.

Without question, the Affordable Care Act has flaws. But why don't our representatives come together to fix what's broken and keep what's working?

I took an oath to do no harm. If only our elected representatives were held to the same standard.

Emma Spencer • St. Louis



Letter writers debate unions, want to bring back Larry Rice to help homeless