

Amy Klobuchar
US Senator
302 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar,

I am writing to you to about the future of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). I am a registered nurse, born and raised in a very rural area of North Dakota, currently living in the state of Minnesota. I would like to encourage you to keep supporting and advancing the ACA.

Every day I take care of the very ill, the very poor, the very rich, the insured, the uninsured, and never do I allow how I care for those individuals be guided by whether or not they can afford the care or have insurance. There are over 52 million Americans who live in rural areas that are more likely to have lower income, higher rates of disability and are less likely to have a job or private insurance coverage verses urban counterparts (Foutz, Artiga, & Garfield, 2017). Everyone in a country as advanced as the United States of America should be entitled to affordable, top-notch healthcare.

The World Health Organization (WHO) describes universal health care as providing individuals with all the health care services they need without having it cause financial hardship (Curtis, Caplanova, & Novak, 2015). We are working towards this with the ACA. It is detrimental to continue to try to repeal it completely and start over from scratch. The ACA is the first time in history that the United States has established some sort of infrastructure to work towards what the WHO identifies as universal healthcare (Curtis, et al., 2015).

We should focus on the positives that have come from the ACA. Across the nation, many more individuals are insured, with those living in rural areas having the largest gains, going from an uninsured rate of 17% down to 12% (Cross-Call, Straw, Sherman, & Broaddus, 2017). More residents in rural areas are receiving primary care and preventative screenings (Cross-Call, et al., 2017). The numbers clearly show that the ACA is working, especially when comparing states that adopted the expansion of Medicaid under the ACA to states that have not. In those states, over 1.7 million in rural America are now covered, and the expansion of Medicaid has also helped rural hospitals (Cross-Call, et al., 2017). According to Cross-Call, et al. (2017), the rural hospitals have seen larger gains than urban areas in regards to Medicaid revenue in the expansion states, while a majority of the rural hospitals that have closed are located in states that have not expanded Medicaid.

Clearly, these outcomes need to be researched further and developed upon. Changes and adjustments certainly need to be made to the ACA, however, the focus needs to shift from fighting and working to repeal the ACA to educating on and researching it. As Curtis, et al. (2015) pointed out, education on the healthcare resources available needs to be provided to the population if we ever want to see any improvements in the outcomes

from quality healthcare. This includes educating citizens on universal health, the current ACA, and what is being done to further improve it. This will allow us to go forth with a healthcare system that will support and provide for all.

I appreciate the work you have done for the state of Minnesota, and the support you have given to the ACA over the years. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

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References

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- Foutz, J., Artiga, S., & Garfield, R. (2017). The role of Medicaid in rural America. *The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation*. Retrieved from <http://files.kff.org/attachment/Issue-Brief-The-Role-of-Medicaid-in-Rural-America>