Durbin: End partisan health care repeal crusade now, work on bipartisan basis to strengthen system for everyone

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WASHINGTON – In a speech on the Senate floor during debate on repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA), U.S. Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) called on his Senate Republican colleagues to end the secret, partisan effort to repeal health care for tens of millions of Americans and instead work in a bipartisan, public manner to strengthen the health care system for all Americans. Referencing remarks made by Senator John McCain (R-AZ) before the full Senate last night, Durbin slammed Senate Republicans

for undermining traditional Senate procedures and crafting an ever-changing health care repeal bill behind closed doors with no input from health care experts, providers, patient groups, or the American public.

"Pending before us on the floor of the United States Senate is legislation that will change health care for every single American, every one of them. It will change it for the 12.5 million people I represent in Illinois," said Durbin. **"What's in this bill that will change it? We honestly can't tell you. The bill has not been written. We aren't able to see it."**

Durbin continued: **"What we should do is take this critical matter that affects every American and every American's health care and send it to a committee. They need to sit down and look at these bills carefully. Let's not make a mistake at the expense of the people who sent us here. Let's stand up for sound, thoughtful judgement. Let's take this to the regular order. Let's do this the right way to the credit of the Senate and to the credit of our country. We took an oath, each and every one of us, to swear to uphold the constitution, and that constitution, that document we revere, spells out exactly what we should do at this moment. Stop what we're doing on this floor. Stop wasting the time of the American people and endangering their health care. Take this to a debate that is befitting a great constitution, a great nation, and a great Senate."**

Video of Durbin's remarks on the Senate floor are available [here](.).

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Last night, Senate Republican's first attempt to repeal health care failed. That proposal would have ended the ACA's Medicaid expansion, allowed insurers to sell "junk plan" in states where they sell ACA-compliant plans, charged older Americans five times more than younger people for insurance, allowed states to seek waivers from "essential health benefits", thrown 22 million Americans off their health insurance, and provided hundreds of billions in tax breaks to big businesses, drug companies, and insurers. Fifty-seven bipartisan senators voted to reject this measure.

Today, Senate Republicans voted on a second attempt to repeal health care. This proposal would have repealed the Affordable Care Act without any replacement. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated that this proposal would have thrown 32 million people off their health insurance over the next decade, increased individual market premiums by 100 percent over the next decade, cut federal Medicaid

funding by $842 billion, and provided more than $600 billion in tax cuts for wealthy individuals and big businesses. Fifty-five bipartisan senators voted to reject this repeal without replacement bill.

All of the Senate Republicans' proposals are opposed by virtually every patient, provider, and medical organization nationwide – including the AARP, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Cancer Society, the American Diabetes Association, and the American Nurses Association.