

# AMERICAN ACADEMY OF CHILD & ADOLESCENT PSYCHIATRY

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March 17, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, The Capitol  
United States Congress  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
H-204, The Capitol  
United States Congress  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of the 9,200 physician members of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) and the millions of American children whom they treat, I write to express our deep concern regarding the American Health Care Act (AHCA). While we applaud your laudable goal of lowering health care costs and providing consumers with additional health care choices, we cannot support the AHCA in its current form.

We are specifically concerned that mental health and substance use coverage would no longer be mandated under the Medicaid expansion in the AHCA. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, just over 20% (or 1 in 5) of America's children either currently or at some point during his or her life have had a seriously debilitating mental health disorder.

Medicaid is the single largest payer of mental health services in America, and it is playing an increasing role in the reimbursement for substance use disorders. We are greatly concerned that the children and families who depend on Medicaid for mental health and substance use services will not be able to access the care they desperately need under the AHCA, as proposed.

We are also troubled by the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) cost estimate that this plan would cause 14 million Americans to lose health care coverage by 2018 and 24 million Americans by 2026. On behalf of America's children, we cannot support this bill in its current form.

We do support your efforts to lower the costs of health care, provide Americans with additional health care choices, and improve the quality of care that Americans receive. We believe there is a better way forward, and we are committed to working with you to achieve your goal for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregory K. Fritz".

Gregory K. Fritz, MD  
President