

# Alliance to Fight for Health Care

## For Immediate Release

May 15, 2020

Contact: Tara Bradshaw

202-441-8255

## New Poll: Large Majority of Americans want Congress to Provide Support for Employer-Provided Health Care

The **Alliance to Fight for Health Care** – a broad stakeholder group dedicated to protecting employer-provided health coverage – continues to urge Congress to take immediate steps to bolster the U.S. health care system. The most efficient way to do so is to help laid-off and furloughed Americans maintain their current employer-provided health care coverage.

A survey conducted by Morning Consult on behalf of the Alliance, shows nearly four in five Americans (78%) support Congress providing funding for COBRA coverage to allow people to stay on their employer-provided health care coverage – even if they lose their jobs. This strong support is consistent across a variety of groups:

- Democrats (85%), Republicans (75%) and Independents (73%)
- Employed (80%) and unemployed (80%)
- Millennials (80%), Generation Xers (79%) and Baby Boomers (78%)
- Individuals making less than \$50K (74%) and more than \$50K (81%)

“This poll confirms Americans want Congress to help people keep their health coverage,” said James A. Klein, president of **American Benefits Council**. “We applaud the bipartisan efforts that provide funding to help people maintain high-quality coverage when they have lost their job or been furloughed. Subsidizing COBRA continuation coverage is the most efficient and effective way to deliver vital protection to America’s families during this period of unprecedented job loss.”

“We must work quickly and together to make sure individuals who lose their job and potentially their employer-sponsored health insurance due to the economic impact of COVID-19 have continued access to affordable health care coverage during this crisis—either through their employer or through federal subsidies to help pay for continued health care coverage premiums, including for church plan continuation coverage,” said The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, Vice Chair of the **Church Alliance**.

The unemployment insurance claims announced this week, just shy of 3 million, bring the total to nearly 36.5. Also this week, the Kaiser Family Foundation [estimated](#) that “as of May 2, 2020, nearly 27 million people could potentially lose” their employer-based coverage and “become uninsured following job loss.” These highlight the need for Congress to act quickly to pass COBRA funding immediately.

Subsidizing COBRA is an important investment in four respects. First, it provides the peace of mind needed at this unprecedented time of a dual health and economic crisis. Second, enabling workers to remain on employer-provided coverage will mitigate the number of people requiring coverage from public programs, which would also involve cost to the government. Third, enabling workers to remain on their employer health plan will smooth the transition for them to be rehired. Fourth, if unemployed workers and their families are compelled to forgo needed health care services because they are uninsured, serious health conditions will worsen or go

undetected. The result will not only hurt patients in the short-term but could also exorbitantly increase the cost of treating more serious conditions.

Speaker Pelosi introduced H.R.6800, the HEROES Act which includes a provision to provide COBRA funding. In addition, H.R. 6810, the Health Care Protection Act, a bipartisan bill introduced by Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL) and Rep. Kendra Horn (D-OK) includes funding for COBRA coverage. As Congress works to fund COBRA continuation coverage it must also provide continuation of coverage for health plans not subject to ERISA, such as church plans.

**The Alliance to Fight for Health Care** stands ready to work with Congress to develop and support policies that must meet four critical needs:

- 1) Aid for Americans who have lost their jobs or been placed on furlough by covering the cost of continuing their health coverage through the crisis
- 2) Support for financially struggling employers and health funds to continue offering critical health coverage
- 3) Enhance availability and affordability of coverage in the individual market for Americans seeking coverage through the Federal or state-based Marketplaces
- 4) Promote policies that support our health care workers on the frontline of this crisis

*The **Alliance to Fight for Health Care** is a broad-based coalition comprised of patient advocates, employer organizations, unions, public sector providers of health coverage, consumer groups, health care companies and other stakeholders that support employer-provided health coverage. The Alliance is committed to ensuring that employer-provided coverage remains an effective and affordable option for working Americans and their families. The coalition (previously working as the **Alliance to Fight the 40**), led the successful effort to repeal the so-called 40% “Cadillac Tax” on health care coverage.*

 @HealthCareFight | [www.fightforhealthcare.com](http://www.fightforhealthcare.com)

# # #