



## House GOP Healthy Futures Task Force Recommendations (Co-Chairs Brett Guthrie and Vern Buchanan)

On June 29, 2021, House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy [announced](#) the formation 17-member *Healthy Future Task Force* to “develop solutions to modernize the American health care system to lower costs, keep Americans healthy, develop better therapies and cures, and provide Americans with more choices. Over the last year and a half, the Healthy Future Task Force has worked to develop the next chapter of the health care agenda and craft legislative proposals that Republicans can advance if they retake the majority.” This agenda focused on:

- Breaking down barriers to help all Americans live healthier and longer.
- Increasing care choices.
- Expanding the range of available providers.
- Encouraging investment in new cures and therapies.
- Lowering the cost of health services.
- Providing a strong safety net for the most vulnerable Americans.
- Protecting access to care for all Americans.
- Ensuring patients remain in control of their health care

### **Committees & Recommendations:**

#### **Security [Subcommittee](#) (Chair Richard Hudson, Rep. Jim Banks, and Rep. Tom Cole)**

Public health security is national security. COVID-19 taught us pandemics can be as much of a national security threat as war and terrorism. As leading proponents of a strong national defense and fiscal responsibility, Republicans are best positioned to ensure the United States is fully prepared and mission ready for the next emerging infectious disease.

#### Supply Chains and China Accountability

- Provide tax reform that energizes domestic manufacturing and innovation
- Support thorough, unencumbered investigations into COVID-19 origins
- Ensure American research dollars do not go to entities controlled by our foreign adversaries, including China and Russia
- Protect our borders by permanently scheduling fentanyl-related substances

#### Pandemic Preparedness

- Strengthen and clarify the role of the Strategic National Stockpile and ensure reliable, robust investments into medical countermeasures and critical medical supplies
- Ensure accountable, strong, streamlined leadership; and clear, delineated authority
- Cut red tape across our public health security preparedness and response systems
- Require the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to collaborate with, use, and enable private sector expertise and capabilities
- Build upon the success of Operation Warp Speed to combat future and emerging infectious diseases that threaten our national security

### Public Health Security

- Restore the National Institutes of Health (NIH) as the premier basic scientific research entity in the world that supports high level, transparent scientific and medical advances
- Require the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to be transparent with the American public about the data used to develop their guidance
- Hold NIH and CDC accountable to core public health missions and not political agendas
- Ensure state and local governments have the flexibility and authority to make the public health and preparedness decisions that best meet the needs of their own communities
- Conduct thorough oversight and require transparency for all federal taxpayer public health dollars, especially those sent overseas

### **Treatment Subcommittee (Chair Brad Wenstrup, Rep. John Joyce, Rep. Bruce Westerman)**

#### Lower Drug Costs for Americans

- Pass H.R. 19, the Lower Costs, More Cures Act, which includes 36 bipartisan provisions to lower drug costs. This includes the first modernization of the Medicare prescription drug program in nearly 20 years. Among other policies the bill would:
  - Create an out-of-pocket cap on drug spending for seniors and people with disabilities.
  - Allow seniors and people with disabilities to spread the cost of drugs over the year so they don't have to pay it all at once.
  - Ensure patients pay the same lower rate for medicines administered by doctors (like drugs for cancer care and Rheumatoid Arthritis), whether they're at their doctor's office or a hospital outpatient department.
  - Promote more low-cost options for all patients by prohibiting "pay for delay" agreements where brand-name drug manufacturers pay to keep generic drugs off the market.
- Build off bipartisan proposals that allow for innovations in how we pay for curative therapies.
- Offer incentives for health plans to share drug discounts with patients directly at the pharmacy counter. American patients deserve, and will thrive with, lower out-of-pocket spending, access to new medicines and cures. To further this, we will:

#### Unleash New Innovative Medicines, Devices, Diagnostics for Patients

- Speed up the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval process to bring more treatments to patients quickly. This would provide patients with life threatening and debilitating diseases more treatment options by broadening FDA Accelerated Approval Program to give more patients living with currently untreatable diseases hope for a treatment or cure.
- Expand and speed up Medicare coverage for breakthrough drugs and devices.
  - The Biden Administration has recently rejected the FDA's gold standard approval by significantly restricting patients' access to the first new Alzheimer's drug in almost two decades. Republicans would prevent bureaucrats from overruling doctors' decisions and remove barriers patients face to medical innovations.
- Diagnose cancers earlier, saving lives and lowering health care costs, by giving seniors access to new, innovative blood tests that can detect more cancers at earlier stages, significantly improving patient outcomes and extending survivability.
- Stop government from putting a number on the value of a patient's life. This calculation is called quality-adjusted life years (QALYs) and it is used by socialist governments to determine the cost

effectiveness of a health intervention. Republicans want to make sure the government can never determine how much your life is worth. QALYs should be banned from all coverage and payment decisions.

- Build off of the flexibilities of the COVID-19 public health emergency to make clinical trials more widely available and speed up development of new treatments and cures. Patients can benefit most when they quickly access innovations without government interference. House Republicans want to get government bureaucrats out of the way of your health care. To further this, we will:

#### Promote American-Made Medicines

- Incentivize domestic medical manufacturing of therapies and therapeutics to prepare for the next pandemic.
- Promote sufficient supply of testing and personal protective equipment.
- Ensure secure access to critical ingredients for medicine.

#### **Affordability Subcommittee (Chair Kevin Hern, Rep. Rick Allen, and Rep. Victoria Spartz)**

Improve Health Care for Employees and Small Business Owners: Employers of all sizes should be able to provide more affordable health insurance that their employees value. Workers should be able to utilize these benefits to the fullest extent. To further this, we will:

- Encourage more portable health coverage that gives employees control over their health spending, while giving employers more options to contribute to their employees' health care expenses.
- Make Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) accessible to more people by allowing people to personalize their health care and save for health costs now and in the future and by removing unnecessary red tape so these accounts work better and are easier to use.
- Reduce outdated Obamacare paperwork mandates to lessen administrative burden and reduce costs.
- Allow small business owners to join together through Association Health Plans to access the economies of scale that large companies enjoy, allowing them to offer more affordable coverage options to their employees.
- Remove barriers for employers to participate in advanced payment initiatives such as direct contracting, high performance networks, and centers for excellence for purchasing health care.

Promote Innovation and Transparency: Health care prices are hidden behind layers of bureaucracy, leaving patients in the dark as to what they will pay when they seek care and contributing to runaway health care costs. No other industry works this way. To empower patients with transparency and more affordable care, we will:

- Seek to codify Trump administration rules that require hospitals, insurers, and middlemen to disclose cost information so patients can make informed decisions about their care.
- Pressure the Biden administration to finally implement the Advance Explanation of Benefits (AEOB), a bipartisan provision Congress passed to give patients unprecedented and revolutionary transparency in their health care prices before they receive care.
- Empower states to approve health insurance plans more suitable to their constituents' needs by lifting burdensome regulations that require cookie-cutter coverage.

Lower Costs and Increase Choices Through Competition: Harmful consolidation has resulted in higher prices, decreased quality of care, and worse health outcomes for Americans. To target the incentives driving this consolidation and limiting competition, we will:

- Build upon the Trump administration's site-neutrality rules and create more fairness in the payment system by passing legislation to 1) ensure CMS pays the same Medicare rates for drugs and clinic visits at physician offices and hospitals, 2) reform the inpatient-only list, and 3) end inappropriate billing practices that lead to higher costs for patients.
- Give patients more ways to receive high-quality care by repealing the moratorium on physician-owned hospitals.
- Conduct congressional oversight of the Federal Trade Commission to ensure it is correctly utilizing its statutory authority to investigate harmful consolidation and promote competition.

**Doctor/Patient Relationship [Subcommittee](#) (Chair Larry Bucshon, M.D., Rep. Greg Murphy, M.D. and Rep. Beth Van Duyne)**

While Democrats want to put bureaucrats in charge of your health care, Republicans know the doctor-patient relationship is foundational to quality health care. Republicans want to improve the patient care experience by allowing providers to focus on patients over paperwork, modernizing antiquated processes that delay patient care, and addressing provider shortages through oversight of health care workforce programs.

Get Washington Out of The Doctor's Office

- Remove harmful federal mandates limiting doctors' time with patients, including ending the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) vaccine requirement for providers and updating hospital visitor guidance.
- Build on the Trump Administration's regulatory success by taking steps to improve quality metrics providers are judged by and ensure outdated measures are being eliminated.
- Ease the complexity of Electronic Health Records by working with providers and Health IT companies to reduce "clicks" required by providers and by setting data standards to improve operability, so the patient stays the main focus of the visit.

Ensure Access to Quality Providers

- Increase oversight and transparency on historic investments in graduate medical education Congress made during the Trump Administration to ensure those investments are translating to improved care for seniors, veterans, and rural communities.
- Reauthorize the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act to strengthen recovery and treatment options for patients who want help with their mental health and substance use disorders.
- Provide certainty surrounding provider reimbursement to ensure patients continue to have access to the services and care they need.

Provide Timely Access to Care for Patients

- Reform prior authorization, which is a source of delayed patient care due to its misuse. Patients, in consultation with their doctors, should be in the driver's seat for their own medical decisions. Doctors – not distant health care bureaucrats - know what is best for their patients and serve as the first line of defense for a patient's unique medical needs.
- Improve care for seniors by streamlining and standardizing the use of prior authorization to encourage real-time decisions, eliminate unnecessary delays in care, and improve overall health outcomes.



**Modernization Subcommittee (Chair Mariannette Miller-Meeks, Rep. Mike Kelly, and Rep. Morgan Griffith)**

Republicans are leading with a new agenda that will modernize health care to improve Americans' quality of life. Instead of Washington bureaucrats rationing health care using Medicare for All, patients will be empowered through increased access to convenient, high-quality care. Our three pillars of modernization are:

Safeguard and Maintain Expanded Telehealth Access

- Address originating site requirements and geographic restrictions, allowing patients – particularly seniors on Medicare – to visit with doctors from the comfort of their homes, or wherever is most convenient for them.
- Maximize employer-sponsored coverage of telehealth and related remote care services through health savings accounts (HSAs) or other innovative payment models.

Crack Down on Fraud, Waste, And Abuse

- Incentivize states to crack down on fraud and make fewer improper Medicaid payments.
- Utilize state-of-the-art technology, including artificial intelligence and automation, to improve the integrity and efficiency of federal health programs, saving patients both time and money.

Expand Access to Innovative, Patient-Centered Technologies

- Empower patients by giving them ownership of who can access their personal health care information and establish data-sharing standards that prioritize privacy and security.
- Streamline and clarify regulatory approaches to medical devices, wearable technology, and AI to provide more health care products that improve individuals' well-being.
- Ensure Electronic Health Records are built around patients and are interoperable, leading to a reduction in the amount of time spent on paperwork, lower risk of missed information, and more effective communication between medical devices to improve patient care coordination.