



Lessons from California

CALIFORNIA USES STATE LEGISLATION TO DEFEND THE ACA AND MEDICAID

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THE ISSUE:

This month, President Trump and Congressional Republicans have begun to make moves to repeal the Affordable Care Act and cut Medicaid. But California has vowed to fight any cuts. In response to a request from Congressman McCarthy of Bakersfield, CA, California's elected officials [spoke out](#) against the president's agenda to take people's health coverage away. Then, in his [state of the state address](#), California Governor Jerry Brown declared: "More than any other state, California embraced the Affordable Care Act and over five million people now enjoy its benefits. But that coverage has come with tens of billions of federal dollars. Were any of that to be taken away, our state budget would be directly affected, possibly devastated. That is why I intend to join with other governors - and with you - to do everything we can to protect the health care of our people." Still, it is clear that the [threat](#) to California's residents and economy is real.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[NHeLP Issue Brief on Impact of Trump's Executive Order on the ACA](#)

[ASPE Report on the Medicaid Expansion](#)

[NASHP Report on the Impact of ACA Repeal by State](#)

[NHeLP paper on why Medicaid is working](#)

[ACA Repeal in CA: Who Stands to Lose?](#)

STRATEGY AND ACTIONS:

California's elected officials have long taken the lead in enshrining provisions of the Affordable Care Act and the Medicaid Act in state statute. As a result, these provisions of the law will not automatically disappear in California if Congress repeals the Affordable Care Act or cuts Medicaid. For example, under the ACA's contraceptive coverage requirement, most private health plans are required to cover all prescribed FDA-approved contraceptives, counseling, and services, without cost sharing. But the [California Contraceptive Coverage Equity Act of 2014](#), which NHeLP co-sponsored, has already expanded on the federal requirement by requiring both private and Medicaid managed care plans to cover all prescribed FDA-approved contraceptives without cost-sharing, and also limited medical management techniques such as step therapy or prior authorization. Similarly, last year California enacted [legislation](#), supported by NHeLP, that codifies the ACA provision that provides Medi-Cal eligibility for former foster youth up to age 26 in state law. The law also implements streamlined eligibility and enrollment procedures for these young adults. This year, NHeLP will work closely with California's legislature and Governor to ensure that the state continues to lead the way, by enacting consumer protections in state law that codify and expand on provisions of the Affordable Care Act and the Medicaid Act and their implementing regulations. For example, NHeLP is supporting [California Senator Ricardo Lara's SB 31](#), a bill that aims to protect information about consumer's religion, national origin, or ethnicity, from federal law enforcement. Among other protections, the bill would prohibit California's Marketplace and Medicaid Agency from sharing consumer's immigration status information with federal immigration officials. Advocates in other states should look for opportunities to work with their legislatures to protect access to health care and maintain the gains and improvements their states have made over the last several years.