



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
January 20, 2017

CONTACT:
Kelsey Raines, 614-456-0060 x228

As Women March on Washington, Women's Health Care Rights Are Under Attack

This Saturday, the day after Donald Trump's inauguration, as many as 200,000 people will participate in the Women's March on Washington. In their mission statement, organizers share the purpose behind the march: "The Women's March on Washington will send a bold message to our new government on their first day in office, and to the world that women's rights are human rights. We stand together, recognizing that defending the most marginalized among us is defending all of us."

As elected officials promise to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA), health care is a human right that is under threat. Many of the health care rights and benefits that the ACA put in place are especially important to women.

What's at stake for women if the ACA is repealed:

- **Millions of women gained access to affordable coverage.** During last year's open enrollment period, 6.8 million women and girls enrolled in coverage for 2016 through the Health Insurance Marketplace.
- **Women can no longer be charged more for health coverage because of their gender.** Before the ACA, women were routinely charged as much as 50% more for coverage just because of their gender. Now, the ACA protects against discrimination in women's health coverage.
- **Women are guaranteed coverage without co-pays for preventive care.** An estimated 55.6 million women with private insurance are able to access contraception, mammograms, cervical cancer screenings, and other preventive services without cost-sharing.
- **Coverage for maternity care is guaranteed without extra cost.** Before the ACA, many health insurance plans didn't cover maternity care or required women to pay more for the additional coverage. What's more, pregnancy could be considered a pre-existing condition, meaning women could be denied coverage for maternity care. Under the ACA, maternity care is considered to be an Essential Health Benefit that must be provided by all health insurance plans.
- **The ACA requires employers to accommodate nursing mothers.** Under the ACA, employers are required to provide enough break time for nursing mothers to pump at work. The ACA also requires most insurance plans to cover breastfeeding support and equipment.
- **Women can't be denied coverage or charged more because of a pre-existing condition.** Before the ACA, women with pre-existing conditions like

diabetes or cancer were routinely denied coverage. Under the ACA, as many as 65 million women with pre-existing conditions no longer experience discrimination when enrolling in coverage.

“The Affordable Care Act has helped millions of women stay healthy and financially secure,” said Steve Wagner, Executive Director of Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio. “It’s important that we all speak up to protect health care that’s fair for everyone. Those who can’t attend the Women’s March on Washington can still get involved by telling their members of Congress not to repeal the Affordable Care Act without a replacement plan that maintains these critical rights and benefits.”

UHCAN Ohio is a statewide non-partisan, non-profit organization building the voice of consumers to achieve quality, affordable, accessible health coverage for all Ohioans. www.uhcanohio.org

###