

***Repeal would allow higher premiums for women and discrimination for domestic violence victims***

**WASHINGTON** – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) today said that if the landmark Affordable Care Act were repealed it would be women, in particular, that would be hurt by the inequalities allowed to remain in our health care system.

Noting the discrimination against women that was outlawed by the Affordable Care Act, Slaughter called the repeal unfair.

**“Health care reform was a major victory for women and any attempt to repeal or defund it is simply unfair to our daughters, our mothers, and our grandmothers,”** said Slaughter a long-time advocate for women’s rights and a leader on health care reform. **“It took us decades to finally make it illegal for insurance companies to charge women 48 percent higher premiums just for being a woman, and to stop the egregious practice of discrimination against domestic violence victims. It’s unfathomable to vote against these protections. The Republican majority is wrong, and I will continue to fight against their attempts to sabotage vital protections for women.”**

Prior to passage of the Affordable Care Act, women faced severe discrimination from health insurance companies. Through a practice known as ‘gender rating’, women who purchased insurance on the individual market paid 48 percent more in premium costs than men. In addition, 79 percent of women who purchased insurance on the individual market did not receive any maternity coverage through their insurance plans.

Unfair too is the practice now outlawed in eight states and the District of Columbia which allowed insurance companies to deny coverage to victims of domestic violence.

**By the time the Affordable Care Act is implemented in 2014:**

- The practice of “gender rating” will end.

- Maternity services will be included in all health insurance plans offered as part of the health insurance exchanges.
- Insurance companies will no longer be able to deny coverage to victims of domestic violence. Previously, eight states and the District of Columbia allowed insurance companies to deny such coverage. No more. Under the Affordable Care Act, this practice is outlawed, and victims of domestic violence will be able to safely and securely access the treatment they deserve.
- Insurance companies will no longer be allowed to classify pregnancy and C-sections as “pre-existing conditions”, and women will no longer face the prospect of discrimination because they gave birth.
- Insurance companies will no longer be allowed to place “lifetime limits” on health benefits for women, and end care when its need the most.
- Women who do not have access to insurance through employers will be able to obtain insurance through health insurance exchanges. These exchanges are being designed as we speak to offer a wide selection of health insurance plans at competitive rates.
- Women will receive free preventative health services, from mammograms to pap smears.
- The “donut hole” in Medicare Part D will be closed through the Affordable Care Act, helping older women pay for healthcare as they grow older.

**“And all of this will be gone if the Republican majority has their way,” said Slaughter. “America should tremble.”**

The cost of repeal is not only high for women, but also lowers a catastrophic boom on our national debt. The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office estimates that repealing health care reform will increase the national deficit by \$230 billion.

Slaughter has been a long-time champion of health care reform and a leading voice on women's equality issues. For more on how health care reform will benefit Western New York, click [here](#) .