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Hillary Clinton's Commitment: Universal, Quality, Affordable Health Care for Everyone in America

The Affordable Care Act was a critically important step toward the goal of universal health care, offering coverage to 20 million more Americans, and ensuring all Americans will never be denied coverage on account of a pre-existing condition or their gender. Today, 90 percent of all Americans have health insurance, the most in the history of our country.

Despite this progress, Hillary believes that we have more work to do to finish our long fight to provide universal, quality, affordable health care to everyone in America. This starts by strengthening, improving and building on the Affordable Care Act to cover more Americans.

First, Hillary will work with governors to expand Medicaid in every state, so that access to care no longer depends on where you live. It is a disgrace that 19 states have left 3 million Americans without health insurance because their states have refused to expanding Medicaid. It is wrong that Republican governors and legislatures are leaving too many Americans without health insurance even though they qualify for coverage. Hillary will launch a national campaign to enroll people who are eligible but not already enrolled. She will expand access to affordable health care to families regardless of immigration status by allowing families to buy health insurance on the health Exchanges regardless of their immigration status.

Second, Hillary will get health care costs under control so that those who have health insurance can afford the health care they need. She will not stand for unjustified health premium increases – she will make sure the Secretary of Health and Human Services has the authority to block or modify unreasonable health insurance premium rate increases so that coverage is more affordable. Hillary has comprehensive plans to address <u>increasing out-of-pocket</u> and <u>prescription drug costs</u>. She will cap prescription drug costs that people have to pay out of pocket, and limit excessive out-of-pocket costs for families. And Hillary will work on long-term solutions to reduce consumer costs of prescription drugs so that these drugs are affordable for all, while not stifling innovation that produces life-saving and life-extending scientific breakthroughs.

Third, consistent with her previous proposals on public options, Hillary will pursue efforts to give Americans in every state in the country the choice of a public-option insurance plan, and to expand Medicare by allowing people 55 years or older to opt in while protecting the traditional Medicare program.

Hillary has also laid out strategies to address a multitude of pressing health care challenges – from <u>Alzheimer's</u>, to <u>autism</u>, mental health and <u>substance abuse</u>, to <u>public health infrastructure</u> and environmental health, to women's health, all the way through <u>Zika</u>.

As we advance toward the goal of universal health care, Hillary believes we must do more to address the lack of access to primary health care, dental care, mental health care and affordable prescription drugs.

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One critical component of establishing universal primary care is to expand our proven system of Federally Qualified Health Centers. Today, 25 million people in the United States get their care from these community health centers each year. We must significantly expand that coverage so that every American, regardless of where they live, has good quality primary health care available to them at a cost they can afford.

The Affordable Care act significantly expanded mandatory funding for FQHCs. As part of her comprehensive health care agenda, Hillary is committed to doubling the funding for primary care services at community health centers over the next decade. In doing so, we will dramatically expand access to millions more people. This means extending the current mandatory funding under the Affordable Care Act and expanding it by \$40 billion over the next 10 years.

Hillary also supports President Obama's call for a near tripling of the size of the National Health Service Corps, which will increase funding to \$810 million in 2017 and grow over time to \$1.3 billion by 2027.

These are good investments for patients and for taxpayers. Today, community health centers save more than \$1,200 per person per year. This is a savings to the overall health care system of \$49 billion each year. And by allowing people to access health care when they need it, we will avoid costly illnesses, hospital stays and trips to emergency rooms. A healthier population also means fewer missed days of school and work. In sum, working toward providing universal primary care to all Americans by investing in community health centers will save billions in unnecessary health care spending.

Together these steps will get us closer to the day when everyone in America has access to quality, affordable health care.

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