As a nurse, I’ve seen what happens when patients delay or forgo medical care because they can’t afford it—they get sicker and have poorer outcomes. Since the passage of the Affordable Care Act, more of my patients have coverage, so they can stay healthier, and follow-up with the care they need. The reality is that patients no longer have to choose between paying their rent and affording their health insurance—and it’s because the ACA delivered on its promise of expanding coverage. With Republicans rushing to repeal the ACA, I fear that these same patients won’t be able to afford coverage moving forward.

Under President Trump and the GOP’s healthcare proposal, {INSERT STATE NUMBER—THOSE WHO WILL LOSE COVERAGE]. This plan will decimate state budgets and slash Medicaid funding. “Trumpcare” isn’t a healthcare plan at all; it’s a tax break for wealthy Americans. The GOP bill would lavish about $600 billion of tax cuts on the wealthy. In fact, the only tax their plan retains from the ACA is the tax on middle-class Americans who obtain health insurance through their employers. Working families, older Americans, children, patients with chronic illnesses and low-income Americans living in rural areas will bear the heaviest cost of this new plan. For example, the Congressional Budget Office—the nonpartisan agency tasked with weighing the impact of every bill introduced in Washington—says that a 64-year-old earning $26,500 would see a 750 percent increase in premiums, from $1,700 a year to $14,600, more than half of his or her income.

It’s no wonder Republicans on Capitol Hill pushed the American Health Care Act through two committees in the dark of night and rushed it to the House floor for a vote; they were trying to hide the details of this devastating attack on working families. The real impact of the GOP plan has been exposed by the CBO, which confirmed that, under this bill, 14 million Americans will lose healthcare the next year and 24 million by 2026.

My profession requires me to advocate for my patients, educate them about disease prevention and management, and treat the whole person so they can thrive in and contribute to their communities.

Unfortunately, the “repeal and replace” bill undermines my ability to care for my community. It will force my hospital to make choices about services based on what it can afford to provide instead of what my community needs. My professional obligation means that I must oppose the GOP plan and speak out on behalf of my patients and my profession.

To be clear, the Affordable Care Act is not perfect. It needs to be improved, not repealed. The ACA changed lives; it helped millions of children, working families, young adults, senior citizens and disabled Americans get and keep the comprehensive health coverage they need to stay well. Through the ACA, Medicaid expansion funding helped stabilize hospital finances and state budgets, and provided support for health services for 5 million children in schools.

The ACA established standards for coverage that affected all of America’s families, with requirements for free preventive screenings and checkups, annual wellness visits, coverage for essential benefits, an end to discrimination against those of us with pre-existing conditions, and coverage for mental health and substance abuse. It helped seniors on Medicare too, making preventive care and screenings free, lowering costs for prescription drugs and stabilizing its funding.

We can’t predict when or if a family member could fall ill. That’s the whole point of insurance, after all—being prepared for when an accident or illness occurs. And that’s why the ACA adjusts its subsidies to account for income, premium costs, age and geography.

As a healthcare professional, it breaks my heart that people go without insurance because of the cost. I don’t want to see us go backward.

The GOP “repeal and ruin” plan would be a disaster for my patients and the millions of Americans who depend on services offered under the Affordable Care Act. Don’t just take my word for it—every major nursing, physician, public health and hospital organization opposes the GOP plan. We put patients first, and we expect Congress and our president to do the same. I urge Sens. XXX XXX {INSERT STATE SENATORS} to oppose this harmful piece of legislation.