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New Research from EBRI:

Health Policy Directions in 2017 and Beyond

WASHINGTON—With the election of President Donald Trump, no domestic policy is a bigger target for change than the Affordable Care Act (ACA), former President Obama’s signature health insurance law. His very first executive order, signed within hours of being inaugurated, was aimed at rolling back parts of the ACA.

But how, exactly, is the law likely to change, and how will this fundamental policy shift affect the U.S. health care and health insurance systems?

The short answer, as the new administration was taking shape: Nobody knows. But whether it’s a “repeal and replace,” as many congressional Republicans have advocated ever since the law was enacted in 2010, or “repeal and delay” or “partial repeal” or “repair” (as some are now suggesting) or just “repeal,” it seems certain that change is on the way.

These issues were explored by a panel of health and policy experts at the nonpartisan Employee Benefit Research Institute’s 79th policy forum held in Washington last December, on the topic “Health Policy Directions in 2017 and Beyond,” attended by more than one hundred people. A summary of the forum is published in the Feb. 23 *EBRI Notes*, online at www.ebri.org

Among the experts speaking at the EBRI policy forum:

- Leah Binder of the Leapfrog Group, representing medium-sized and large employers.
- Paul Fronstin, director of the Health Research and Education Program at EBRI.
- James Gelfand, senior vice president for health policy with the ERISA Industry Committee (representing the nation’s largest employers).
- Robert Graboyes of the Mercatus Center at George Mason University.
- Kris Haltmeyer, vice president for policy at the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Association.
- Randy Hardock, a partner at the benefits law firm of Davis & Harman in Washington, DC, and a former Treasury Department official.
- Katherine Hayes, a Medicare/Medicaid/health reform specialist with the Bipartisan Policy Center.
- Tom Miller of the American Enterprise Institute.
- Carolyn Smith of Alston & Bird, who previously served on the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation in Congress.
- Katy Spangler, senior vice president of health policy at the American Benefits Council, which represents large employers.
- Gene Steuerle, a tax expert at the Urban Institute.
- Jeanette Thornton, head of ACA policy development for America’s Health Insurance Plans (AHIP).

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