Lessons Learned about Effective Communications during the 2017 Protect Our Care Campaign to Defend the ACA
In December 2016, a coalition of national health care advocacy & policy groups formed the Protect Our Care Coalition.

The goal of the campaign is to take back the narrative from Republican critics who depict the Affordable Care Act as a government boondoggle. IAP Photo

Liberals mount campaign to save Obamacare

By RACHANA PRADHAN | 12/07/2016 03:39 PM EST
Goals that drove communications:

1. Protect ACA from repeal
2. Protect ACA from 1,000 cuts
3. Protect Medicaid
4. Protect CHIP and ensure funding
5. Lay ownership of health care system at the feet of Donald Trump and GOP Congress
Key Messages:

1. Repeal is irresponsible and dangerous

2. Replacement plans fall short – contain old ideas that have been tried and failed

3. The GOP is in disarray

4. Repeal is harmful: It’s impossible to preserve ACA protections under GOP replacement plans
Lesson Learned:
Maintain message discipline -- Don’t get side-tracked!
Assumption Going in to 2017:

Most powerful message would be the **number of people at risk of losing coverage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AFFORDABLE CARE ACT</th>
<th>SENATE PLAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 MILLION GAINED COVERAGE</td>
<td>22 MILLION loose coverage</td>
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</table>
Lesson Learned:

Coverage numbers most powerful when targeted—at the state level

95K LOSE
95,000 Mainers would lose health coverage

590K DENIED
590,000 Mainers with pre-existing conditions could be denied life-saving coverage
Lesson Learned:

Instead of coverage #s, lead with

1. Impact of bills on people with **preexisting health conditions**

2. **Affordability issues** -- How bills would drive up costs
Focus on Preexisting Conditions:

77%

“About 77 percent of those polled favor requiring insurers to provide coverage to people with pre-existing conditions, and 69 percent want children up to age 26 to still get coverage under their parents' plans.”

Harris Poll, 12/2016
Affordability is Big Concern:

Middle-Income Seniors’ Premiums Skyrocket under Senate Repeal Bill*

Jennifer

Individual: 64-year-old
Earning just over: $45,000/year

$8,320
Increase in Annual Premiums

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACA</th>
<th>SENATE PLAN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>28%</td>
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Premiums as Percent of Annual Income

Lesson Learned:

People ❤️ Medicaid
Communication Takeaway for 2018:

“Never let the public forget that Trump and the Republicans in Congress see the alternative to the Affordable Care Act as a system that weakens protections for preexisting conditions, imposes an age tax through higher premiums on people over the age of 50, leaves 16 million to 32 million more Americans uninsured, and eviscerates Medicaid at the expense of children, people with serious disabilities, and people in need of nursing home care.” – Hart Polling Memo, August 2017
Lessons Learned about Formats:

Don’t be afraid to use a GIF – levity works

![GIF](https://example.com/gif.png)
Lessons Learned about Formats:

Power of Video, Even if Rough/Amateur
Live Video Can Break Through Social Noise
Questions?