

# R.I. group denounces Texas court's ruling on Affordable Care Act

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PROVIDENCE — A broad coalition of community and advocacy organizations on Monday sharply criticized the decision last week by a federal judge in Texas ruling the Affordable Care Act — Obamacare — unconstitutional.

“Friday’s misguided decision by District Court Judge Reed O’Connor in Texas v. Azar striking down the entirety of the Affordable Care Act marks a devastating blow to the health security of Rhode Islanders,” Linda Katz, chairwoman of the Protect Our Healthcare Coalition, said in a statement.

“We hope a higher court will reverse it based on its weak legal grounding and the grave harm overturning the ACA would cause to Rhode Islanders and millions of Americans nationwide,” said Katz, who is also policy director at Rhode Island’s Economic Progress Institute.

Gov. Gina Raimondo over the weekend pledged to “take all steps necessary” to protect Obamacare, which will remain in effect during appeals of the Texas judge’s ruling.

“The decision threatens to resurrect barriers to health care for people with serious illnesses, including cancer, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and mental illness,” the coalition said in its release. “If the ruling stands, anyone with a pre-existing condition could be charged more for health coverage or denied access to coverage altogether.”

The Economic Progress Institute, Mental Health Association of Rhode Island, NAACP Providence Branch, United Way of Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Community Food Bank, Planned Parenthood and Thundermist Health Center are among the 23 members of the coalition.