

Linda Katz and Karen Malcolm: It's time for advocates to act, not panic

Posted Jun 12, 2017 at 2:01 AM

Kudos to Lynn Ardit for providing excellent coverage of the impact that a repeal of the Affordable Care Act would have on Rhode Islanders (“Mounting anxiety,” news, June 3). We have heard from Rhode Islanders, like those featured in this article, who are concerned that the loss of coverage may be imminent.

It's important to know that under the House-passed “American Health Care Act,” any changes to coverage would not happen until 2020. Moreover, the Senate has yet to pass its own bill and there is mounting pressure from governors in “red states” as well as “blue” not to take away Medicaid coverage.

We are fortunate to have a congressional delegation that is adamantly opposed to taking away Medicaid from 70,000 Rhode Islanders and capping federal funding for Medicaid, which could lead to cuts in services for more than 200,000 Rhode Islanders — seniors, adults and children with disabilities, and children and families who rely on Medicaid for basic health care as well as long-term care services. The Economic Progress Institute is working with the “Protect Our Health Care” Coalition (www.protecthealthri.org) to support our delegation in these efforts, to educate Rhode Islanders about Medicaid and to monitor and report on what's happening in Congress. We invite folks to join us. To paraphrase Joe Hill: “Don't panic, organize.”

Linda Katz and Karen Malcolm

Providence

Ms. Katz is policy director for the Economic Progress Institute. Ms. Malcolm is Coordinator of the Protect Our Health Care Coalition.