

AACN's

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Special Edition: Healthcare Reform *AACN Urges the Senate to Put Patients First*

On the afternoon of July 25, the U.S. Senate cleared the procedural hurdle necessary to begin debate on healthcare reform by a vote of 51-50. Vice President Pence cast the tie-breaking vote with all Senators siding along party lines with the exception of Susan Collins (R-ME) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), who voted “no.” Immediately following the vote, Senator John McCain (R-AZ), recently diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer, made a call to his colleagues stating, “There’s greater satisfaction in respecting our differences, but not letting them prevent agreements that don’t require abandonment of core principles, agreements made in good faith that help improve lives and protect the American people. The Senate is capable of that.”

How Will the Senate Proceed?

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) quickly moved to initiate the process for debate, which allows for 20 hours of debate evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats on amendments related to repealing and/or replacing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). Following three hours of debate, a modified version of the [Senate’s Better Care Reconciliation Act](#) failed by a vote of 43-57. Over the next 48 hours, a series of amendments are expected to ensue, with several sources indicating that a more narrowed “skinny repeal” bill may prevail, but what it will entail remains to be seen.

Take a Stance and Tell the Senate to “Put Patients First”

It is imperative that the collective voice of AACN’s membership echoes the voices of our patients—millions of whom will be significantly impacted by this process. [Take action](#) today by sending a message to your Senators urging them to vote no on any resulting proposal that redirects, weakens, or eliminates coverage options regardless of patients’ preexisting conditions and Medicaid expansion. AACN will be keeping our Grassroots Network members apprised as events unfold. Follow [@AACNPolicy](#) on Twitter to stay up to date on breaking news. Thank you for helping to ensure academic nursing’s voice is heard on Capitol Hill.