“ASCO opposes the Better Care Reconciliation Act of 2017, the Senate healthcare bill released today, and urges lawmakers to reject the measure and work on an alternative that provides key protections for patients with cancer. We are disappointed that the legislation fails to meet our guiding principles for healthcare reform by halting Medicaid expansion, reinstating annual and lifetime coverage caps, and cutting coverage for essential health benefits including cancer screening. These provisions are critical to providing high-quality cancer care for all Americans, and removing them from federal law will reduce overall patient access to cancer care in this country and lead to even greater state-by-state disparities in the delivery of care.

“Around 1.7 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer this year. Many of them will join the ranks of the record number of cancer survivors in the United States today—15 million, compared with 3 million in 1971. However, when individuals with cancer do not have adequate health insurance coverage they are diagnosed with more advanced cancers, receive care later in their disease course, have less access to needed medical care, and have worse outcomes than those with better coverage. The Senate bill could threaten decades of progress against cancer by exacerbating the barriers to life-extending care that too many patients already face.

“We believe that real healthcare reform, which ensures meaningful access to high-quality care
for any American with serious and life-threatening diseases such as cancer, is possible in this country, and ASCO previously offered healthcare reform principles to guide the process. Our principles call for access to affordable and sufficient healthcare coverage for all Americans regardless of their income or health status, and state that any efforts to reform the healthcare system at the national, state, or local levels should ensure that people at risk of or diagnosed with cancer can continue to access affordable insurance without interruption.

“ASCO will continue to work with lawmakers on a proposal that improves cancer care for all Americans.”

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**About ASCO:**

Founded in 1964, the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Inc. (ASCO®) is committed to making a world of difference in cancer care. As the world's leading organization of its kind, ASCO represents more than 40,000 oncology professionals who care for people living with cancer. Through research, education, and promotion of the highest-quality patient care, ASCO works to conquer cancer and create a world where cancer is prevented or cured, and every survivor is healthy. ASCO is supported by its affiliate organization, the Conquer Cancer Foundation. Learn more at [www.ASCO.org](http://www.ASCO.org), explore patient education resources at [www.Cancer.Net](http://www.Cancer.Net), and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.