

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4804

July 20, 2018

Clergy Members of West Virginia

Dear Friend:

As you may know, an ongoing lawsuit, led by 20 U.S. Attorneys General which as of June 8, 2018, will no longer be defended by the U.S. Department of Justice, would allow insurance companies to once again deny coverage to West Virginians with pre-existing conditions. More than 800,000 West Virginians have a pre-existing condition, including 90,600 children, including West Virginians with cancer, heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, asthma or women who have been pregnant.

Repealing this provision will have detrimental impacts for families across West Virginia. I have always said that our nation's current healthcare system is in need of repair. But every West Virginian deserves access to quality, affordable healthcare regardless of their health conditions. I will not stand by while we risk going back to a time when insurance companies could play God as they picked and chose those they wished to insure.

I recently hosted a roundtable with members of West Virginia's clergy to discuss the pending lawsuit and the impact it would have on their congregations. This roundtable was just the beginning of the conversation because for a lot of West Virginians with pre-existing conditions, insurance coverage is the difference between life and death. That is why I am reaching out to you today. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue, this is a human issue. As a community leader and a person of faith, you know firsthand the difficulties that many West Virginians with preexisting conditions face on a daily basis.

As you may be aware, I have asked West Virginians to send me their stories about the importance of protecting access for those with pre-existing conditions and I have been reading these letters on the Senate floor. Please share this with your congregations and encourage them to email their stories to healthcare@manchin.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Joe Manchin, III
United States Senator