

## [Rep. Gonzalez Warns Of The ‘Human Consequences’ Of Health Repeal: Without Reform, People Will ‘Die’](#)

Today, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives [passed a repeal](#) of the health care reforms that were signed into law last year. Prior to the vote, ThinkProgress attended a blogger meeting with Democratic House members and asked them how they plan to respond to the Republican Party’s push to dismantle the new health law.

Many of the members rightly noted that, contrary to the [wild claims](#) of conservatives, repealing the health law would both increase the deficit by [\\$230 billion](#) over ten years and slow down annual job growth by “[250,000 to 400,000](#)” jobs annually.

Reps. Charles Gonzalez (D-TX) and Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) also told ThinkProgress that there are enormous human costs to repealing the bill, and noted a study that estimates [32,000 Americans](#) would perish every year if the reforms are repealed. Gonzalez said that it was important to remember that there are “human consequences” to repeal, and relayed the story of [Bonnie Terry](#), a cancer patient he knew who couldn’t afford treatment and passed away:

**THINKPROGRESS: There was an economist at the Roosevelt Institute that estimated that 32,000 people would die every year if this bill was repealed. Do you think that the people who vote for repeal have a moral responsibility for the loss of life that may result?**

**GONZALEZ: We have to understand that there’s human consequences to everything that we do up here. [...] You’re talking about the daily lives of millions of Americans. The fact that there’s 32,000 who will not receive care and will die?! [...] And believe me there are many people who don’t receive timely care, diagnosis or treatment and die. I happen to know them. I’ve attended the funerals.**

People will say gosh, she was a really intelligent, vibrant, robust person, what do you mean she

didn't have insurance? What do you mean she couldn't get that kind of cancer treatment? You know, and her name was Bonnie Terry. [...] I really felt if we passed this bill that we wouldn't have situations like Bonnie faced with her cancer a few years ago, and she did die.

Meanwhile, Schakowsky said that it is “absolutely correct” to talk about health care in moral terms, saying that “people do have to consider the consequences of taking health care accessibility away from people, and that some people, 32,000 it's estimated, will die because of that”:

**THINKPROGRESS: Do you think the people who vote to repeal bear a moral responsibility for any lives lost as a result of that?**

SCHAKOWSKY: The United States already, more than any so-called rich country in the world, has more preventable deaths because of the lack of insurance. **And to use the word moral is absolutely correct.** [...] That **h**  
**as to be the consideration. This is probably not the time to say that blood is on your hands kind of thing, but I think people do have to consider consequences of taking health care accessibility away from people, and that some people, 32,000, will die because of that.**

[Watch it:](#)

It is also important to note that there are many other human consequences to repealing the bill, including once again legalizing the practice of denying people insurance because of pre-existing conditions. A recent HHS study found that [nearly half](#) of the adult population under the age of 65 could possibly have one of these conditions.

– Zaid Jilani and [Kevin Donohoe](#)