

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 543

To repeal title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for cooperative governing of individual health insurance coverage offered in interstate commerce.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 27, 2015

Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. BOUSTANY, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. GIBSON, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. HARPER, Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois, Mr. LANCE, Mr. LONG, Mrs. LOVE, Mr. MCCLINTOCK, Mr. OLSON, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Ways and Means and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To repeal title I of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for cooperative governing of individual health insurance coverage offered in interstate commerce.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as “Health Care Choice Act  
3 of 2015”.

4 **SEC. 2. SPECIFICATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY**  
5 **FOR ENACTMENT OF LAW.**

6 This Act is enacted pursuant to the power granted  
7 Congress under article I, section 8, clause 3, of the United  
8 States Constitution.

9 **SEC. 3. FINDINGS.**

10 Congress finds the following:

11 (1) The application of numerous and significant  
12 variations in State law and the implementation of  
13 the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act im-  
14 pacts the ability of insurers to offer, and individuals  
15 to obtain, affordable individual health insurance cov-  
16 erage, thereby impeding commerce in individual  
17 health insurance coverage.

18 (2) Mandates for health care coverage estab-  
19 lished by title I of the Patient Protection and Af-  
20 fordable Care Act will significantly elevate health in-  
21 surance costs beyond State and Federal ability to  
22 pay.

23 (3) Individual health insurance coverage is in-  
24 creasingly offered through the Internet, other elec-  
25 tronic means, and by mail, all of which are inher-  
26 ently part of interstate commerce.

1           (4) In response to these issues, it is appropriate  
2           to encourage increased efficiency in the offering of  
3           individual health insurance coverage through a col-  
4           laborative approach by the States in regulating this  
5           coverage.

6           (5) The establishment of risk-retention groups  
7           has provided a successful model for the sale of insur-  
8           ance across State lines, as the acts establishing  
9           those groups allow insurance to be sold in multiple  
10          States but regulated by a single State.

11 **SEC. 4. REPEAL OF TITLE I OF PPACA.**

12          Effective as of the enactment of the Patient Protec-  
13          tion and Affordable Care Act (Public Law 111–148), title  
14          I of such Act is repealed (and any amendments to such  
15          title, or to amendments made by such title, made by the  
16          Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010  
17          (Public Law 111–152) are repealed), and the provisions  
18          of law amended or repealed by such title (or amendments)  
19          are restored or revived as if such title (and amendments)  
20          had not been enacted.

21 **SEC. 5. COOPERATIVE GOVERNING OF INDIVIDUAL**  
22 **HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.**

23          (a) IN GENERAL.—Title XXVII of the Public Health  
24          Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300gg et seq.) is amended by add-  
25          ing at the end the following new part:

1           **“PART D—COOPERATIVE GOVERNING OF**  
2           **INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

3           **“SEC. 2795. DEFINITIONS.**

4           “In this part:

5                   “(1) PRIMARY STATE.—The term ‘primary  
6           State’ means, with respect to individual health insur-  
7           ance coverage offered by a health insurance issuer,  
8           the State designated by the issuer as the State  
9           whose covered laws shall govern the health insurance  
10          issuer in the sale of such coverage under this part.  
11          An issuer, with respect to a particular policy, may  
12          only designate one such State as its primary State  
13          with respect to all such coverage it offers. Such an  
14          issuer may not change the designated primary State  
15          with respect to individual health insurance coverage  
16          once the policy is issued, except that such a change  
17          may be made upon renewal of the policy. With re-  
18          spect to such designated State, the issuer is deemed  
19          to be doing business in that State.

20                   “(2) SECONDARY STATE.—The term ‘secondary  
21          State’ means, with respect to individual health insur-  
22          ance coverage offered by a health insurance issuer,  
23          any State that is not the primary State. In the case  
24          of a health insurance issuer that is selling a policy  
25          in, or to a resident of, a secondary State, the issuer

1 is deemed to be doing business in that secondary  
2 State.

3 “(3) HEALTH INSURANCE ISSUER.—The term  
4 ‘health insurance issuer’ has the meaning given such  
5 term in section 2791(b)(2), except that such an  
6 issuer must be licensed in the primary State and be  
7 qualified to sell individual health insurance coverage  
8 in that State.

9 “(4) INDIVIDUAL HEALTH INSURANCE COV-  
10 ERAGE.—The term ‘individual health insurance cov-  
11 erage’ means health insurance coverage offered in  
12 the individual market, as defined in section  
13 2791(e)(1).

14 “(5) APPLICABLE STATE AUTHORITY.—The  
15 term ‘applicable State authority’ means, with respect  
16 to a health insurance issuer in a State, the State in-  
17 surance commissioner or official or officials des-  
18 ignated by the State to enforce the requirements of  
19 this title for the State with respect to the issuer.

20 “(6) HAZARDOUS FINANCIAL CONDITION.—The  
21 term ‘hazardous financial condition’ means that,  
22 based on its present or reasonably anticipated finan-  
23 cial condition, a health insurance issuer is unlikely  
24 to be able—

1           “(A) to meet obligations to policyholders  
2 with respect to known claims and reasonably  
3 anticipated claims; or

4           “(B) to pay other obligations in the normal  
5 course of business.

6           “(7) COVERED LAWS.—

7           “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘covered  
8 laws’ means the laws, rules, regulations, agree-  
9 ments, and orders governing the insurance busi-  
10 ness pertaining to—

11           “(i) individual health insurance cov-  
12 erage issued by a health insurance issuer;

13           “(ii) the offer, sale, rating (including  
14 medical underwriting), renewal, and  
15 issuance of individual health insurance cov-  
16 erage to an individual;

17           “(iii) the provision to an individual in  
18 relation to individual health insurance cov-  
19 erage of health care and insurance related  
20 services;

21           “(iv) the provision to an individual in  
22 relation to individual health insurance cov-  
23 erage of management, operations, and in-  
24 vestment activities of a health insurance  
25 issuer; and

1           “(v) the provision to an individual in  
2           relation to individual health insurance cov-  
3           erage of loss control and claims adminis-  
4           tration for a health insurance issuer with  
5           respect to liability for which the issuer pro-  
6           vides insurance.

7           “(B) EXCEPTION.—Such term does not in-  
8           clude any law, rule, regulation, agreement, or  
9           order governing the use of care or cost manage-  
10          ment techniques, including any requirement re-  
11          lated to provider contracting, network access or  
12          adequacy, health care data collection, or quality  
13          assurance.

14          “(8) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means the 50  
15          States and includes the District of Columbia, Puerto  
16          Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa,  
17          and the Northern Mariana Islands.

18          “(9) UNFAIR CLAIMS SETTLEMENT PRAC-  
19          TICES.—The term ‘unfair claims settlement prac-  
20          tices’ means only the following practices:

21                 “(A) Knowingly misrepresenting to claim-  
22                 ants and insured individuals relevant facts or  
23                 policy provisions relating to coverage at issue.

1           “(B) Failing to acknowledge with reason-  
2           able promptness pertinent communications with  
3           respect to claims arising under policies.

4           “(C) Failing to adopt and implement rea-  
5           sonable standards for the prompt investigation  
6           and settlement of claims arising under policies.

7           “(D) Failing to effectuate prompt, fair,  
8           and equitable settlement of claims submitted in  
9           which liability has become reasonably clear.

10           “(E) Refusing to pay claims without con-  
11           ducting a reasonable investigation.

12           “(F) Failing to affirm or deny coverage of  
13           claims within a reasonable period of time after  
14           having completed an investigation related to  
15           those claims.

16           “(G) A pattern or practice of compelling  
17           insured individuals or their beneficiaries to in-  
18           stitute suits to recover amounts due under its  
19           policies by offering substantially less than the  
20           amounts ultimately recovered in suits brought  
21           by them.

22           “(H) A pattern or practice of attempting  
23           to settle or settling claims for less than the  
24           amount that a reasonable person would believe  
25           the insured individual or his or her beneficiary



1 was entitled by reference to written or printed  
2 advertising material accompanying or made  
3 part of an application.

4 “(I) Attempting to settle or settling claims  
5 on the basis of an application that was materi-  
6 ally altered without notice to, or knowledge or  
7 consent of, the insured.

8 “(J) Failing to provide forms necessary to  
9 present claims within 15 calendar days of a re-  
10 quest with reasonable explanations regarding  
11 their use.

12 “(K) Attempting to cancel a policy in less  
13 time than that prescribed in the policy or by the  
14 law of the primary State.

15 “(10) FRAUD AND ABUSE.—The term ‘fraud  
16 and abuse’ means an act or omission committed by  
17 a person who, knowingly and with intent to defraud,  
18 commits, or conceals any material information con-  
19 cerning, one or more of the following:

20 “(A) Presenting, causing to be presented  
21 or preparing with knowledge or belief that it  
22 will be presented to or by an insurer, a rein-  
23 surer, broker or its agent, false information as  
24 part of, in support of or concerning a fact ma-  
25 terial to one or more of the following:

1           “(i) An application for the issuance or  
2 renewal of an insurance policy or reinsur-  
3 ance contract.

4           “(ii) The rating of an insurance policy  
5 or reinsurance contract.

6           “(iii) A claim for payment or benefit  
7 pursuant to an insurance policy or reinsur-  
8 ance contract.

9           “(iv) Premiums paid on an insurance  
10 policy or reinsurance contract.

11           “(v) Payments made in accordance  
12 with the terms of an insurance policy or  
13 reinsurance contract.

14           “(vi) A document filed with the com-  
15 missioner or the chief insurance regulatory  
16 official of another jurisdiction.

17           “(vii) The financial condition of an in-  
18 surer or reinsurer.

19           “(viii) The formation, acquisition,  
20 merger, reconsolidation, dissolution or  
21 withdrawal from one or more lines of in-  
22 surance or reinsurance in all or part of a  
23 State by an insurer or reinsurer.

24           “(ix) The issuance of written evidence  
25 of insurance.

1           “(x) The reinstatement of an insur-  
2           ance policy.

3           “(B) Solicitation or acceptance of new or  
4           renewal insurance risks on behalf of an insurer  
5           reinsurer or other person engaged in the busi-  
6           ness of insurance by a person who knows or  
7           should know that the insurer or other person  
8           responsible for the risk is insolvent at the time  
9           of the transaction.

10           “(C) Transaction of the business of insur-  
11           ance in violation of laws requiring a license, cer-  
12           tificate of authority or other legal authority for  
13           the transaction of the business of insurance.

14           “(D) Attempt to commit, aiding or abet-  
15           ting in the commission of, or conspiracy to com-  
16           mit the acts or omissions specified in this para-  
17           graph.

18 **“SEC. 2796. APPLICATION OF LAW.**

19           “(a) IN GENERAL.—The covered laws of the primary  
20           State shall apply to individual health insurance coverage  
21           offered by a health insurance issuer in the primary State  
22           and in any secondary State, but only if the coverage and  
23           issuer comply with the conditions of this section with re-  
24           spect to the offering of coverage in any secondary State.

1       “(b) EXEMPTIONS FROM COVERED LAWS IN A SEC-  
2       ONDARY STATE.—Except as provided in this section, a  
3       health insurance issuer with respect to its offer, sale, rat-  
4       ing (including medical underwriting), renewal, and  
5       issuance of individual health insurance coverage in any  
6       secondary State is exempt from any covered laws of the  
7       secondary State (and any rules, regulations, agreements,  
8       or orders sought or issued by such State under or related  
9       to such covered laws) to the extent that such laws would—

10               “(1) make unlawful, or regulate, directly or in-  
11               directly, the operation of the health insurance issuer  
12               operating in the secondary State, except that any  
13               secondary State may require such an issuer—

14                       “(A) to pay, on a nondiscriminatory basis,  
15                       applicable premium and other taxes (including  
16                       high risk pool assessments) which are levied on  
17                       insurers and surplus lines insurers, brokers, or  
18                       policyholders under the laws of the State;

19                       “(B) to register with and designate the  
20                       State insurance commissioner as its agent solely  
21                       for the purpose of receiving service of legal doc-  
22                       uments or process;

23                       “(C) to submit to an examination of its fi-  
24                       nancial condition by the State insurance com-  
25                       missioner in any State in which the issuer is

1 doing business to determine the issuer’s finan-  
2 cial condition, if—

3 “(i) the State insurance commissioner  
4 of the primary State has not done an ex-  
5 amination within the period recommended  
6 by the National Association of Insurance  
7 Commissioners; and

8 “(ii) any such examination is con-  
9 ducted in accordance with the examiners’  
10 handbook of the National Association of  
11 Insurance Commissioners and is coordi-  
12 nated to avoid unjustified duplication and  
13 unjustified repetition;

14 “(D) to comply with a lawful order  
15 issued—

16 “(i) in a delinquency proceeding com-  
17 menced by the State insurance commis-  
18 sioner if there has been a finding of finan-  
19 cial impairment under subparagraph (C);  
20 or

21 “(ii) in a voluntary dissolution pro-  
22 ceeding;

23 “(E) to comply with an injunction issued  
24 by a court of competent jurisdiction, upon a pe-  
25 tition by the State insurance commissioner al-

1           leging that the issuer is in hazardous financial  
2           condition;

3           “(F) to participate, on a nondiscriminatory  
4           basis, in any insurance insolvency guaranty as-  
5           sociation or similar association to which a  
6           health insurance issuer in the State is required  
7           to belong;

8           “(G) to comply with any State law regard-  
9           ing fraud and abuse (as defined in section  
10          2795(10)), except that if the State seeks an in-  
11          junction regarding the conduct described in this  
12          subparagraph, such injunction must be obtained  
13          from a court of competent jurisdiction;

14          “(H) to comply with any State law regard-  
15          ing unfair claims settlement practices (as de-  
16          fined in section 2795(9)); or

17          “(I) to comply with the applicable require-  
18          ments for independent review under section  
19          2798 with respect to coverage offered in the  
20          State;

21          “(2) require any individual health insurance  
22          coverage issued by the issuer to be countersigned by  
23          an insurance agent or broker residing in that Sec-  
24          ondary State; or



1 products, before purchasing this policy, you should care-  
2 fully review the policy and determine what health care  
3 services the policy covers and what benefits it provides,  
4 including any exclusions, limitations, or conditions for  
5 such services or benefits.’.

6 “(d) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN RECLASSIFICATIONS  
7 AND PREMIUM INCREASES.—

8 “(1) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of this sec-  
9 tion, a health insurance issuer that provides indi-  
10 vidual health insurance coverage to an individual  
11 under this part in a primary or secondary State may  
12 not upon renewal—

13 “(A) move or reclassify the individual in-  
14 sured under the health insurance coverage from  
15 the class such individual is in at the time of  
16 issue of the contract based on the health-status  
17 related factors of the individual; or

18 “(B) increase the premiums assessed the  
19 individual for such coverage based on a health  
20 status-related factor or change of a health sta-  
21 tus-related factor or the past or prospective  
22 claim experience of the insured individual.

23 “(2) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in paragraph  
24 (1) shall be construed to prohibit a health insurance  
25 issuer—



1           “(A) from terminating or discontinuing  
2 coverage or a class of coverage in accordance  
3 with subsections (b) and (c) of section 2742;

4           “(B) from raising premium rates for all  
5 policy holders within a class based on claims ex-  
6 perience;

7           “(C) from changing premiums or offering  
8 discounted premiums to individuals who engage  
9 in wellness activities at intervals prescribed by  
10 the issuer, if such premium changes or incen-  
11 tives—

12                   “(i) are disclosed to the consumer in  
13 the insurance contract;

14                   “(ii) are based on specific wellness ac-  
15 tivities that are not applicable to all indi-  
16 viduals; and

17                   “(iii) are not obtainable by all individ-  
18 uals to whom coverage is offered;

19           “(D) from reinstating lapsed coverage; or

20           “(E) from retroactively adjusting the rates  
21 charged an insured individual if the initial rates  
22 were set based on material misrepresentation by  
23 the individual at the time of issue.

24           “(e) PRIOR OFFERING OF POLICY IN PRIMARY  
25 STATE.—A health insurance issuer may not offer for sale

1 individual health insurance coverage in a secondary State  
2 unless that coverage is currently offered for sale in the  
3 primary State.

4       “(f) LICENSING OF AGENTS OR BROKERS FOR  
5 HEALTH INSURANCE ISSUERS.—Any State may require  
6 that a person acting, or offering to act, as an agent or  
7 broker for a health insurance issuer with respect to the  
8 offering of individual health insurance coverage obtain a  
9 license from that State, with commissions or other com-  
10 pensation subject to the provisions of the laws of that  
11 State, except that a State may not impose any qualifica-  
12 tion or requirement which discriminates against a non-  
13 resident agent or broker.

14       “(g) DOCUMENTS FOR SUBMISSION TO STATE IN-  
15 SURANCE COMMISSIONER.—Each health insurance issuer  
16 issuing individual health insurance coverage in both pri-  
17 mary and secondary States shall submit—

18               “(1) to the insurance commissioner of each  
19 State in which it intends to offer such coverage, be-  
20 fore it may offer individual health insurance cov-  
21 erage in such State—

22                       “(A) a copy of the plan of operation or fea-  
23 sibility study or any similar statement of the  
24 policy being offered and its coverage (which

1 shall include the name of its primary State and  
2 its principal place of business);

3 “(B) written notice of any change in its  
4 designation of its primary State; and

5 “(C) written notice from the issuer of the  
6 issuer’s compliance with all the laws of the pri-  
7 mary State; and

8 “(2) to the insurance commissioner of each sec-  
9 ondary State in which it offers individual health in-  
10 surance coverage, a copy of the issuer’s quarterly fi-  
11 nancial statement submitted to the primary State,  
12 which statement shall be certified by an independent  
13 public accountant and contain a statement of opin-  
14 ion on loss and loss adjustment expense reserves  
15 made by—

16 “(A) a member of the American Academy  
17 of Actuaries; or

18 “(B) a qualified loss reserve specialist.

19 “(h) POWER OF COURTS TO ENJOIN CONDUCT.—  
20 Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the  
21 authority of any Federal or State court to enjoin—

22 “(1) the solicitation or sale of individual health  
23 insurance coverage by a health insurance issuer to  
24 any person or group who is not eligible for such in-  
25 surance; or

1           “(2) the solicitation or sale of individual health  
2 insurance coverage that violates the requirements of  
3 the law of a secondary State which are described in  
4 subparagraphs (A) through (H) of section  
5 2796(b)(1).

6           “(i) POWER OF SECONDARY STATES TO TAKE AD-  
7 MINISTRATIVE ACTION.—Nothing in this section shall be  
8 construed to affect the authority of any State to enjoin  
9 conduct in violation of that State’s laws described in sec-  
10 tion 2796(b)(1).

11          “(j) STATE POWERS TO ENFORCE STATE LAWS.—

12           “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the provisions of  
13 subsection (b)(1)(G) (relating to injunctions) and  
14 paragraph (2), nothing in this section shall be con-  
15 strued to affect the authority of any State to make  
16 use of any of its powers to enforce the laws of such  
17 State with respect to which a health insurance issuer  
18 is not exempt under subsection (b).

19           “(2) COURTS OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION.—

20 If a State seeks an injunction regarding the conduct  
21 described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection  
22 (h), such injunction must be obtained from a Fed-  
23 eral or State court of competent jurisdiction.

1           “(k) STATES’ AUTHORITY TO SUE.—Nothing in this  
2 section shall affect the authority of any State to bring ac-  
3 tion in any Federal or State court.

4           “(l) GENERALLY APPLICABLE LAWS.—Nothing in  
5 this section shall be construed to affect the applicability  
6 of State laws generally applicable to persons or corpora-  
7 tions.

8           “(m) GUARANTEED AVAILABILITY OF COVERAGE TO  
9 HIPAA ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS.—To the extent that a  
10 health insurance issuer is offering coverage in a primary  
11 State that does not accommodate residents of secondary  
12 States or does not provide a working mechanism for resi-  
13 dents of a secondary State, and the issuer is offering cov-  
14 erage under this part in such secondary State which has  
15 not adopted a qualified high risk pool as its acceptable  
16 alternative mechanism (as defined in section 2744(c)(2)),  
17 the issuer shall, with respect to any individual health in-  
18 surance coverage offered in a secondary State under this  
19 part, comply with the guaranteed availability requirements  
20 for eligible individuals in section 2741.

21 **“SEC. 2797. PRIMARY STATE MUST MEET FEDERAL FLOOR**  
22 **BEFORE ISSUER MAY SELL INTO SECONDARY**  
23 **STATES.**

24           “A health insurance issuer may not offer, sell, or  
25 issue individual health insurance coverage in a secondary

1 State if the State insurance commissioner does not use  
2 a risk-based capital formula for the determination of cap-  
3 ital and surplus requirements for all health insurance  
4 issuers.

5 **“SEC. 2798. INDEPENDENT EXTERNAL APPEALS PROCE-**  
6 **DURES.**

7 “(a) **RIGHT TO EXTERNAL APPEAL.**—A health insur-  
8 ance issuer may not offer, sell, or issue individual health  
9 insurance coverage in a secondary State under the provi-  
10 sions of this title unless—

11 “(1) both the secondary State and the primary  
12 State have legislation or regulations in place estab-  
13 lishing an independent review process for individuals  
14 who are covered by individual health insurance cov-  
15 erage, or

16 “(2) in any case in which the requirements of  
17 subparagraph (A) are not met with respect to the ei-  
18 ther of such States, the issuer provides an inde-  
19 pendent review mechanism substantially identical (as  
20 determined by the applicable State authority of such  
21 State) to that prescribed in the ‘Health Carrier Ex-  
22 ternal Review Model Act’ of the National Association  
23 of Insurance Commissioners for all individuals who  
24 purchase insurance coverage under the terms of this  
25 part, except that, under such mechanism, the review

1 is conducted by an independent medical reviewer, or  
2 a panel of such reviewers, with respect to whom the  
3 requirements of subsection (b) are met.

4 “(b) QUALIFICATIONS OF INDEPENDENT MEDICAL  
5 REVIEWERS.—In the case of any independent review  
6 mechanism referred to in subsection (a)(2)—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In referring a denial of a  
8 claim to an independent medical reviewer, or to any  
9 panel of such reviewers, to conduct independent  
10 medical review, the issuer shall ensure that—

11 “(A) each independent medical reviewer  
12 meets the qualifications described in paragraphs  
13 (2) and (3);

14 “(B) with respect to each review, each re-  
15 viewer meets the requirements of paragraph (4)  
16 and the reviewer, or at least 1 reviewer on the  
17 panel, meets the requirements described in  
18 paragraph (5); and

19 “(C) compensation provided by the issuer  
20 to each reviewer is consistent with paragraph  
21 (6).

22 “(2) LICENSURE AND EXPERTISE.—Each inde-  
23 pendent medical reviewer shall be a physician  
24 (allopathic or osteopathic) or health care profes-  
25 sional who—

1           “(A) is appropriately credentialed or li-  
2 censed in 1 or more States to deliver health  
3 care services; and

4           “(B) typically treats the condition, makes  
5 the diagnosis, or provides the type of treatment  
6 under review.

7           “(3) INDEPENDENCE.—

8           “(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-  
9 graph (B), each independent medical reviewer  
10 in a case shall—

11                   “(i) not be a related party (as defined  
12 in paragraph (7));

13                   “(ii) not have a material familial, fi-  
14 nancial, or professional relationship with  
15 such a party; and

16                   “(iii) not otherwise have a conflict of  
17 interest with such a party (as determined  
18 under regulations).

19           “(B) EXCEPTION.—Nothing in subpara-  
20 graph (A) shall be construed to—

21                   “(i) prohibit an individual, solely on  
22 the basis of affiliation with the issuer,  
23 from serving as an independent medical re-  
24 viewer if—



1           “(I) a non-affiliated individual is  
2 not reasonably available;

3           “(II) the affiliated individual is  
4 not involved in the provision of items  
5 or services in the case under review;

6           “(III) the fact of such an affili-  
7 ation is disclosed to the issuer and the  
8 enrollee (or authorized representative)  
9 and neither party objects; and

10          “(IV) the affiliated individual is  
11 not an employee of the issuer and  
12 does not provide services exclusively or  
13 primarily to or on behalf of the issuer;

14          “(ii) prohibit an individual who has  
15 staff privileges at the institution where the  
16 treatment involved takes place from serv-  
17 ing as an independent medical reviewer  
18 merely on the basis of such affiliation if  
19 the affiliation is disclosed to the issuer and  
20 the enrollee (or authorized representative),  
21 and neither party objects; or

22          “(iii) prohibit receipt of compensation  
23 by an independent medical reviewer from  
24 an entity if the compensation is provided  
25 consistent with paragraph (6).

1           “(4) PRACTICING HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL  
2           IN SAME FIELD.—

3           “(A) IN GENERAL.—In a case involving  
4           treatment, or the provision of items or serv-  
5           ices—

6                   “(i) by a physician, a reviewer shall be  
7                   a practicing physician (allopathic or osteo-  
8                   pathic) of the same or similar specialty, as  
9                   a physician who, acting within the appro-  
10                  priate scope of practice within the State in  
11                  which the service is provided or rendered,  
12                  typically treats the condition, makes the  
13                  diagnosis, or provides the type of treat-  
14                  ment under review; or

15                   “(ii) by a non-physician health care  
16                   professional, the reviewer, or at least 1  
17                   member of the review panel, shall be a  
18                   practicing non-physician health care pro-  
19                   fessional of the same or similar specialty  
20                   as the non-physician health care profes-  
21                   sional who, acting within the appropriate  
22                   scope of practice within the State in which  
23                   the service is provided or rendered, typi-  
24                   cally treats the condition, makes the diag-

1           nosis, or provides the type of treatment  
2           under review.

3           “(B) PRACTICING DEFINED.—For pur-  
4           poses of this paragraph, the term ‘practicing’  
5           means, with respect to an individual who is a  
6           physician or other health care professional, that  
7           the individual provides health care services to  
8           individual patients on average at least 2 days  
9           per week.

10          “(5) PEDIATRIC EXPERTISE.—In the case of an  
11          external review relating to a child, a reviewer shall  
12          have expertise under paragraph (2) in pediatrics.

13          “(6) LIMITATIONS ON REVIEWER COMPENSA-  
14          TION.—Compensation provided by the issuer to an  
15          independent medical reviewer in connection with a  
16          review under this section shall—

17                 “(A) not exceed a reasonable level; and

18                 “(B) not be contingent on the decision ren-  
19                 dered by the reviewer.

20          “(7) RELATED PARTY DEFINED.—For purposes  
21          of this section, the term ‘related party’ means, with  
22          respect to a denial of a claim under a coverage relat-  
23          ing to an enrollee, any of the following:

24                 “(A) The issuer involved, or any fiduciary,  
25                 officer, director, or employee of the issuer.

1           “(B) The enrollee (or authorized represent-  
2           ative).

3           “(C) The health care professional that pro-  
4           vides the items or services involved in the de-  
5           nial.

6           “(D) The institution at which the items or  
7           services (or treatment) involved in the denial  
8           are provided.

9           “(E) The manufacturer of any drug or  
10          other item that is included in the items or serv-  
11          ices involved in the denial.

12          “(F) Any other party determined under  
13          any regulations to have a substantial interest in  
14          the denial involved.

15          “(8) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this sub-  
16          section:

17                 “(A) ENROLLEE.—The term ‘enrollee’  
18                 means, with respect to health insurance cov-  
19                 erage offered by a health insurance issuer, an  
20                 individual enrolled with the issuer to receive  
21                 such coverage.

22                 “(B) HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL.—The  
23                 term ‘health care professional’ means an indi-  
24                 vidual who is licensed, accredited, or certified  
25                 under State law to provide specified health care

1 services and who is operating within the scope  
2 of such licensure, accreditation, or certification.

3 **“SEC. 2799. ENFORCEMENT.**

4 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subsection (b), with  
5 respect to specific individual health insurance coverage the  
6 primary State for such coverage has sole jurisdiction to  
7 enforce the primary State’s covered laws in the primary  
8 State and any secondary State.

9 “(b) SECONDARY STATE’S AUTHORITY.—Nothing in  
10 subsection (a) shall be construed to affect the authority  
11 of a secondary State to enforce its laws as set forth in  
12 the exception specified in section 2796(b)(1).

13 “(c) COURT INTERPRETATION.—In reviewing action  
14 initiated by the applicable secondary State authority, the  
15 court of competent jurisdiction shall apply the covered  
16 laws of the primary State.

17 “(d) NOTICE OF COMPLIANCE FAILURE.—In the case  
18 of individual health insurance coverage offered in a sec-  
19 ondary State that fails to comply with the covered laws  
20 of the primary State, the applicable State authority of the  
21 secondary State may notify the applicable State authority  
22 of the primary State.”.

23 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by  
24 subsection (a) shall apply to individual health insurance

1 coverage offered, issued, or sold after the date that is one  
2 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

3 (c) GAO ONGOING STUDY AND REPORTS.—

4 (1) STUDY.—The Comptroller General of the  
5 United States shall conduct an ongoing study con-  
6 cerning the effect of the amendment made by sub-  
7 section (a) on—

8 (A) the number of uninsured and under-in-  
9 sured;

10 (B) the availability and cost of health in-  
11 surance policies for individuals with pre-existing  
12 medical conditions;

13 (C) the availability and cost of health in-  
14 surance policies generally;

15 (D) the elimination or reduction of dif-  
16 ferent types of benefits under health insurance  
17 policies offered in different States; and

18 (E) cases of fraud or abuse relating to  
19 health insurance coverage offered under such  
20 amendment and the resolution of such cases.

21 (2) ANNUAL REPORTS.—The Comptroller Gen-  
22 eral shall submit to Congress an annual report, after  
23 the end of each of the 5 years following the effective  
24 date of the amendment made by subsection (a), on  
25 the ongoing study conducted under paragraph (1).

1 **SEC. 6. SEVERABILITY.**

2       If any provision of the Act or the application of such  
3 provision to any person or circumstance is held to be un-  
4 constitutional, the remainder of this Act and the applica-  
5 tion of the provisions of such to any other person or cir-  
6 cumstance shall not be affected.

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