

[Discussion Draft]

**AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDMENT IN THE
NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE TO H.R. 2646
OFFERED BY M____.**

Add at the appropriate place the following:

1 **SEC. ____.** SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT REPUBLICAN PRO-
2 **POSED BUDGET CUTS TO MEDICAID HARM**
3 **ABILITY OF STATES TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO**
4 **CRITICAL, TIMELY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**
5 **SERVICES FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE**
6 **AMERICANS.**

7 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The Medicaid program under title XIX of
9 the Social Security Act is the largest payor of behav-
10 ioral health services in the United States.

11 (2) Research has shown that—

12 (A) low-income individuals disproportion-
13 ately experience behavioral health conditions
14 and may have difficulty accessing care; and

15 (B) according to the Kaiser Family Foun-
16 dation, mental illness is more than twice as
17 prevalent among individuals receiving medical
18 assistance under the Medicaid program as it is

1 in the general population, and roughly 49 per-
2 cent of the individuals receiving such medical
3 assistance who have disabilities also have a psy-
4 chiatric illness.

5 (3) Some budget proposals made in the past
6 few years have proposed drastically cutting Federal
7 spending with respect to the Medicaid program and
8 restructuring the Medicaid program by converting
9 the program to a block grant program and according
10 to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, the
11 fiscal year 2016 budget proposed by the majority
12 would cut Federal spending with respect to the Med-
13 icaid program and the Children's Health Insurance
14 Program under title XXI of the Social Security Act
15 by \$913,000,000,000 over the next decade.

16 (4) The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Of-
17 fice concluded, in analyzing a proposal to convert the
18 Medicaid program into a block grant program in the
19 majority's budget plan in 2012, that unless States
20 increased the State's share of expenditures under
21 the Medicaid program very substantially to make up
22 for the deep proposed cuts to the Federal share of
23 such expenditures, States would have to take steps
24 such as—

1 (A) cutting eligibility, which would lead to
2 more uninsured low-income individuals;

3 (B) cutting covered health care services,
4 which would lead to more underinsured low-in-
5 come individuals; or

6 (C) cutting the already low rates of pay-
7 ment States make to health care providers
8 under the Medicaid program, which would likely
9 cause more providers to withdraw from partici-
10 pation in Medicaid, and thereby reduce bene-
11 ficiaries' access to care.

12 (5) The Urban Institute estimated that such
13 proposal would lead States to terminate the eligi-
14 bility for medical assistance under the State plan
15 under title XIX of the Social Security Act of a num-
16 ber of individuals, ranging from 14,300,000 to
17 20,500,000 individuals by 2022.

18 (6) In addition, proposals to cut Federal fund-
19 ing of the Medicaid program and convert the Med-
20 icaid program into a block grant program would
21 have a disproportionate impact on individuals with
22 behavioral health conditions and because many men-
23 tal health and substance abuse services are optional
24 under Federal law, such services could be at a high

1 risk for not being covered under the Medicaid pro-
2 gram.

3 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
4 gress that—

5 (1) proposed Federal budget cuts to the Med-
6 icaid program under title XIX of the Social Security
7 Act would add tens of millions of low-income individ-
8 uals to the ranks of the uninsured, and would under-
9 mine the ability of such individuals access to health
10 care services, including critical behavioral health
11 services;

12 (2) proposed budget cuts to the Medicaid pro-
13 gram under title XIX of the Social Security Act
14 would disproportionately affect low-income individ-
15 uals with behavioral health conditions; and

16 (3) Congress should focus its efforts on improv-
17 ing the Medicaid program to expand access and im-
18 prove quality rather than cutting Federal funding
19 and undermining coverage for the most vulnerable
20 citizens in the United States.

