

Utah enrollment numbers rise despite efforts to repeal Affordable Care Act

By Glen Mills | gills@good4utah.com

Published 01/08 2016 04:47PM

Link: <http://www.good4utah.com/news/local-news/utah-enrollment-numbers-rise-despite-efforts-to-repeal-affordable-care-act>

Salt Lake City, Utah- (ABC 4 Utah)
– President Obama's signature health care law is still one of the most divisive issues in national politics.

Congressional republicans have claimed a small victory in their fight against Obamacare.



"It's just another big boondoggle to try to give federal government control over all of our lives and move us more and more towards socialized medicine. And that's what the democrats have been doing," said Senator Orrin Hatch, (R) Ut.

Both the Senate and House have passed bills to repeal the controversial law.

Hatch says it's a significant move, even though the president will veto it.

"I think it's important that we show that we are trying to change health care, so that it works in this society," said Hatch.

Others say it's a waste of time.

"It's just too bad, you know the representatives in Washington D.C. are more interested in playing press release politics than in focusing on some of the real issues for Utahns who need health insurance," said Jason Stevenson with Utah Health Policy Project.

Stevenson says more and more Utahns are signing up for coverage on the exchange.

With a few weeks to go in open enrollment more than 151,000 Utahns have signed up for coverage.

That's up from 126,000 thousand last year and 84,000 in the first open enrollment period.

"This is a good thing for Utah families. They are taking advantage of it. They are using it to protect themselves not only for their health, but also their financial security," said Stevenson.

Hatch says there is a better way.

That's why he is sponsoring the Patient Care Act.

It's a replacement that would put more power in the hands of the states.

"Some of the big, liberal states like California, New York, Illinois, they are never going to work well no matter what you do for them. But, the rest of the states will have a chance to get health care costs under control, having better health care," said Hatch.

Open enrollment ends on January 31, 2016, but it was extended for people who were with one of the co-ops that went under or pulled their plans from the exchange.

Customers who had plans with Arches, Altius and Bridgespan have until March 1, 2016 to sign up for coverage.

This year also marks the peak for the fines people will pay for not having insurance.

Those fines go up to \$695 per adult and \$347 per child or 2.5% of your income.

For help signing up call 211 from your phone or visit takecareutah.org.

