

# Senator Hatch sponsors bill targeting Affordable Care Act

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Salt Lake City, Utah- (ABC4 Utah) – Congressional Republicans are taking aim at the Affordable Care Act this week. Utah Senator, Orrin Hatch wants to repeal and replace the ACA all together.

In the meantime, his focus is on chipping away at specific provisions.

It's President Obama's signature law, but it's faced strong opposition from the beginning.

"Obamacare is an unmitigated disaster, and it's hit Utah families and small businesses the hardest," said Hatch, (R) Utah.



Hatch and other congressional Republicans want it gone.

In the last year they have worked to scale back the law.

"First, we delayed the Cadillac tax until 2020. Then, we enacted a one year moratorium on the health insurance tax," said Hatch.

Now, he's sponsoring the Small Business Health Care Relief Act.

It would allow businesses with 50 employees or fewer to provide tax free health reimbursement accounts.

"Small businesses play a crucial role in our innovative, growing economy, and they deserve our help," said Hatch.



Supporters of the ACA say it's good to have this discussion.

"We want to improve upon the ACA, and if there are some things coming out of Congress that will do that we're all in favor of taking a look at it," said Jason Stevenson, with Utah Health Policy Project.

Stevenson says the families they see come in tell a different story.

"Many of them had previously been denied coverage, because of preexisting conditions or, because it was too expensive. So, those families are telling us that this is a good thing, that they have coverage, that they are going to the doctor," said Stevenson.

Stevenson says even though the law can be improved he's opposed to repealing it.

"Just too much politics. It doesn't actually reflect what people want, and how people are using and view health care," said Stevenson.

Hatch says people want a better way, and he's committed to make it happen.

"Replace it with a patient centered alternative that works better for all Utahns," said Hatch.

Updated numbers show enrollment is down about 1.6 million across the country.

Opponents point to that as failure.

Supporters say those people are transitioning to other plans, which is the point of the law.

This week House Republicans, lead by Speaker, Paul Ryan released a plan to repeal and replace the ACA.