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 English

We Need Politics That Work

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 By [Vail Valley Partnership](#)  10/4/2025



Politics today often feels less like leadership and more like reality TV: full of shouting, stunts, and endless cable debates that generate heat but no solutions. Most of us are simply exhausted by the drama, the extremes, and the outrage machine that solves nothing.

What we need (and what I think most Americans quietly crave) is a return to practical, results-driven politics: a government that does its job, solves problems, and moves beyond culture wars.

That's not a radical idea. It might be the most radical idea of all these days. Simply focusing on solutions feels almost rebellious.

I believe in capitalism, free enterprise, and free trade. Our economy thrives on the ideas, ingenuity, and hard work of people. But capitalism isn't chaos. We need smart oversight, not endless rules. When the government works well, it protects consumers, encourages growth, and promotes fairness. That should be something we all support, regardless of party.

Here in Eagle County, public-private partnerships—from workforce housing to skills training—show what's possible when leaders collaborate instead of clash. When business owners, nonprofits, and local government work together, real progress happens. It might not make headlines on cable news, but that's what leadership looks like.

We need more of that spirit on the national stage. America should double down on what we do best: technology, biotech, and innovation. The future isn't reviving industries for nostalgia's sake—it's leading where others won't. Investing in tomorrow means looking forward, not backward.

American business succeeds because of ambition and determination. That's why we must have an immigration system that works. We can—and should—have secure borders and uphold our values. Humane, modern reform means faster courts, more processing capacity, and a real path to citizenship for people who work hard and follow the law. Deport criminals, not parents trying to build a better life for their children born here.

Our tax system also needs fixing. It currently rewards loopholes and moving jobs offshore while asking working families to carry too much of the burden. The wealthiest individuals and corporations should pay their fair share, not out of spite, but for balance.

Our healthcare system is broken. But we don't have to choose between access and innovation. We can build a system that ensures coverage for all and rewards breakthroughs. This isn't about blaming providers—it's about demanding better outcomes. We're capable of figuring this out.

Protecting democracy should be non-negotiable. Every vote matters and should be easy to cast, whether by mail or in person. Expanding access, not restricting it, strengthens our republic.

The same is true for education. A child's future shouldn't depend on their zip code. We must invest in public schools so every kid, no matter their background, has a real chance to succeed.

I believe in personal freedom—who you love, how you identify, and the decisions you make with your doctor. The government should serve people, not micromanage our private lives.

Here's my bottom line: I want a government that works competently, fairly, and without drama. I'm not loyal to a party; I'm loyal to common sense, individual liberty, and real results. I'll be voting this way when I return my ballot.

We need fewer provocateurs and more problem-solvers. Fewer flamethrowers and more bridge-builders. It's time to stop rewarding those who shout the loudest—and start listening to those who quietly get things done.

It's time to bring back politics that work—not for a party, but for the people. For all of us.

Chris Romer is president & CEO of Vail Valley Partnership, a 3-time national chamber of the year. Learn more at VailValleyPartnership.com



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Trust varies depending on a few factors, political affiliation and generation included.

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OPINION

Trust in media at an all-time low according to latest Gallup poll



President Donald Trump holds a press conference with the media last month at the White House. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

This comes as no surprise, and yet it remains incredibly disappointing: trust in the media appears to be at an all-time low.

1972 when that number was at 68%. And in 1976, in the aftermath of Watergate, trust in the media was at a whopping 72%.

For the record, the question asked by Gallup was: “In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the mass media — such as newspapers, TV and radio — when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately and fairly — a great deal, a fair amount, not very much or none at all?”

Keep digging and the numbers get even more grim. Right now, seven in 10 Americans say they have “not very much” confidence (36%) or “none at all” (34%) in the news.

The distrust, predictably, is more stark depending on political views. Republicans' trust in the media has plummeted to single digits — a mere 8%. Then again, it hasn't been above 21% since 2015.

Hmm, what happened in 2015?

Oh yeah, Donald Trump ran for president for the first time. Since then, he has intentionally attempted to sway public opinion about the media. He has done this by repeatedly characterizing coverage he doesn't like as “fake news,” and calling journalists the “enemy of the people.” And judging by these kinds of polls, his tactics have been effective.

The percentage of Republicans who say they have “no trust at all” in the media also skyrocketed since Trump hit the political landscape. In 2015, that number was less than 30%. Now, it's 62%.

However, that's not to say media trust hasn't dipped among Independents and Democrats. The survey found that trust in mass media has also sunk to lower levels among Democrats (51%) and Independents (27%).

That's not the only noticeable gap in media trust.

Gallup wrote, "There is a clear generational divide in trust in the media that has grown particularly stark over the past decade, according to an analysis of three-year aggregated data to increase sample sizes. In the most recent three-year period, spanning 2023 to 2025, 43% of adults aged 65 and older trust the media, compared with no more than 28% in any younger age group."

In the bottom line, Gallup wrote:

Confidence in the mass media is historically low, with fewer than three in 10 Americans now placing trust in newspapers, television and radio to report the news fully, fairly and accurately. The decline is evident across all major partisan groups, though Republicans' confidence is now in the single digits, while independents remain largely skeptical. Democrats, who traditionally have been most positive toward the media, now register only a slim majority.

Generational divides further underscore the erosion, with older adults holding significantly more faith than younger Americans in the media. Given younger Democrats' relatively low confidence in the media, overall trust could decrease further in the future, unless Republican trust rebounds.

With confidence fractured along partisan and generational lines, the challenge for news organizations is not only to deliver fair and accurate reporting but also to regain credibility across an increasingly polarized and skeptical public.

Oh, by sure to check out this piece from The Hollywood Reporter's Erik Hayden: ["Media Trust Hits New Low, But One Detail Gets Overlooked."](#)

Your input

GUEST ESSAY

These 6 Charts Explain Why the Government Shut Down

Sept. 30, 2025

Listen to this article · 4:49 min [Learn more](#)**By Steven Rattner**

Mr. Rattner, a contributing Opinion writer, served as counselor to the Treasury secretary in the Obama administration.

All the political skirmishing around the looming government shutdown has obscured the critical reason for it in the first place: Republicans have essentially stopped saying they want to repeal Obamacare, but quietly, they are doing exactly that.

Over the past nine months, Republicans have gone a long way toward dismantling key Obamacare provisions under the misleading guise of reforming or improving our health care system. As a result, more than 20 million Americans face higher insurance premiums next year. And almost 14 million Americans could lose their health insurance altogether over the next decade — an estimated 3.3 million in 2026 alone.

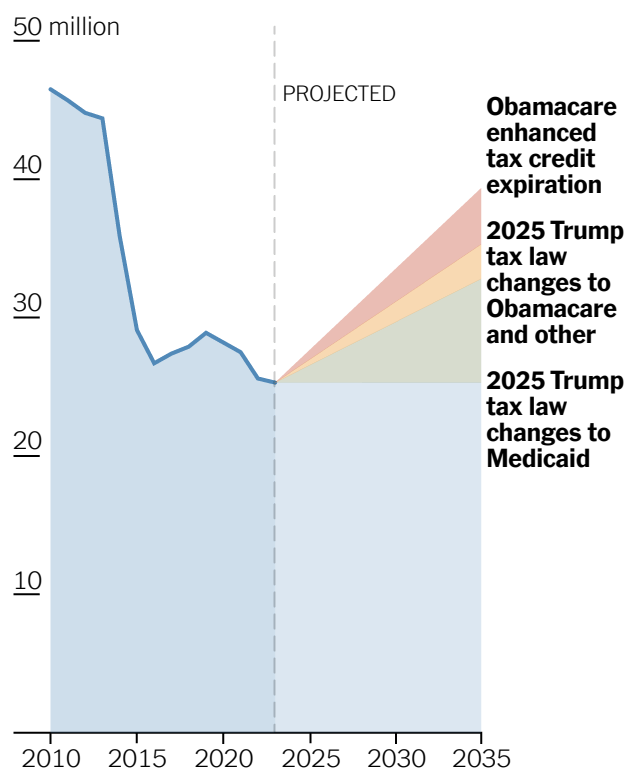
That's more than 70 percent of those who gained coverage since Obamacare went into effect.

You may be forgiven for missing this headline. There wasn't one. In 2016, Donald Trump ran on a promise to abolish the program and kept up his crusade throughout his first term, only to have the effort deep-sixed by Senator John McCain. This time around, Mr. Trump has rarely — if ever — mentioned the Affordable Care Act by name. Nor have his fellow Republicans.

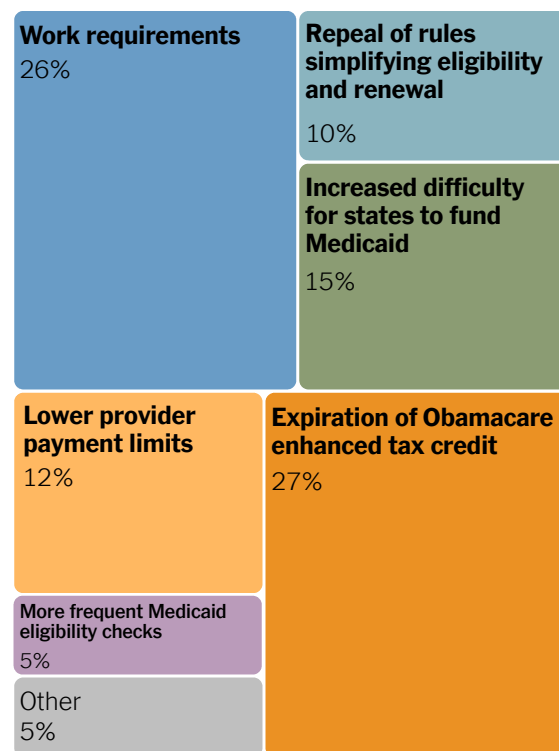
But they never stopped trying. And this year they have made substantial progress. The outcome of the looming shutdown will determine whether Democrats can gain back at least a modicum of ground.

Death by Many Cuts

Without a deal, the number of uninsured Americans will rise



Health care spending cuts by provision



Note: Obamacare enhanced tax credit expiration indicates spending avoided rather than spending cut. • Source: Congressional Budget Office; KFF • By The New York Times

Since most of its provisions went into effect in 2014, Obamacare has been stunningly successful at reducing the ranks of the uninsured: from 44.4 million in 2013 to 26.7 million in 2016.

Then three months ago, Congress passed its huge tax and spending package (known as the One Big Beautiful Bill). Tucked into that legislation were a number of granular, difficult-to-comprehend changes to the government piece of our health care system, particularly Medicaid.

One of them, a work requirement for able-bodied adults, is likely to strip health care coverage from millions of Americans who lack the resources to navigate government bureaucracy. According to the Congressional Budget Office, over the next 10 years, that provision will cost 5.3 million people their coverage.

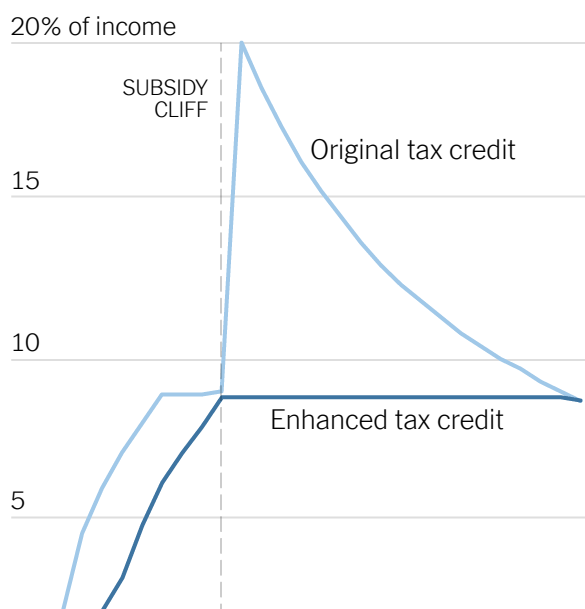
Other changes were so obscure that only dogged health care aficionados can understand them.

Today Americans making less than \$150,000 a year who bought insurance on one of the Affordable Care Act's exchanges can receive a tax credit to offset part of the cost of their coverage. Republicans chose not to extend that tax break in the tax and spending bill. Now, without government intervention, it will expire at the end of the year. That could be responsible for more than a quarter of the lost coverage, and it's likely to be the focal point of any negotiations during a possible shutdown.

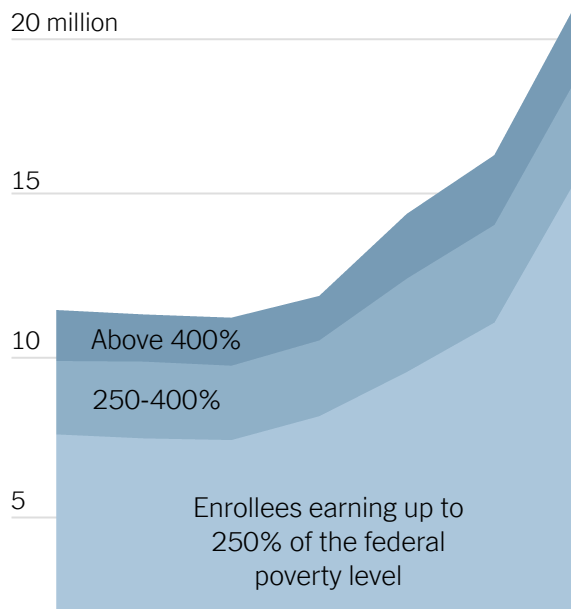
Affordable Care

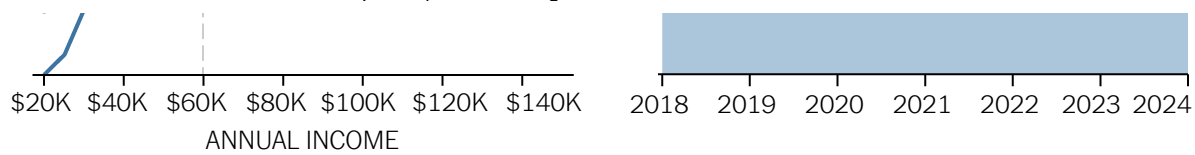
Percentage of income paid for a benchmark marketplace plan

For the average 60-year-old in 2024



Obamacare enrollment by income level





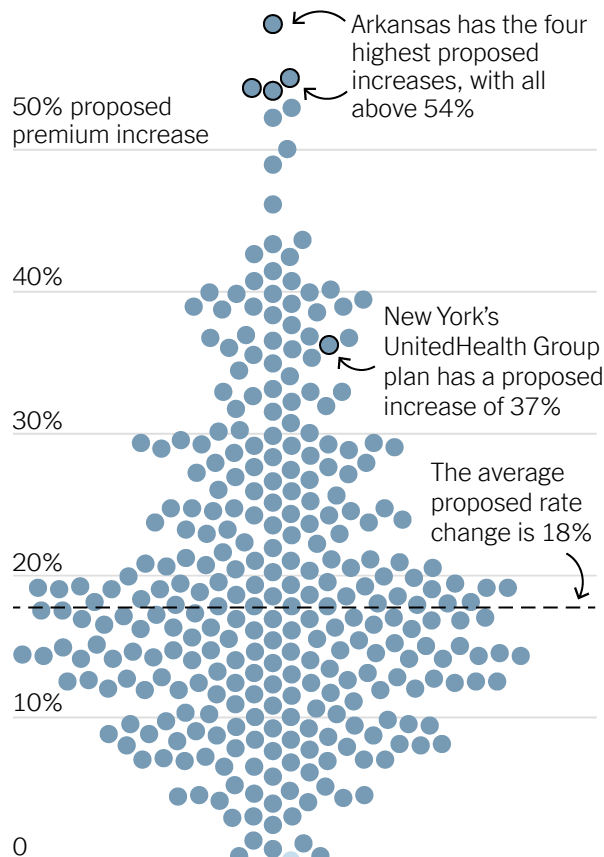
Sources: The Commonwealth Fund; KFF • By The New York Times

Passed during the Biden administration, this tax break has helped many of the 24 million Americans who purchased their insurance through the exchanges in two ways. It has slashed existing premiums for lower-income Americans. Plus, it has capped premiums for those earning from just above \$60,000 to \$150,000 annually — a group that under the prior system suffered a huge premium jump — at 8.5 percent of income.

Not surprisingly, people rushed to take advantage of this new benefit; more than 19 million now receive the tax break, up from 10 million before the enhancement.

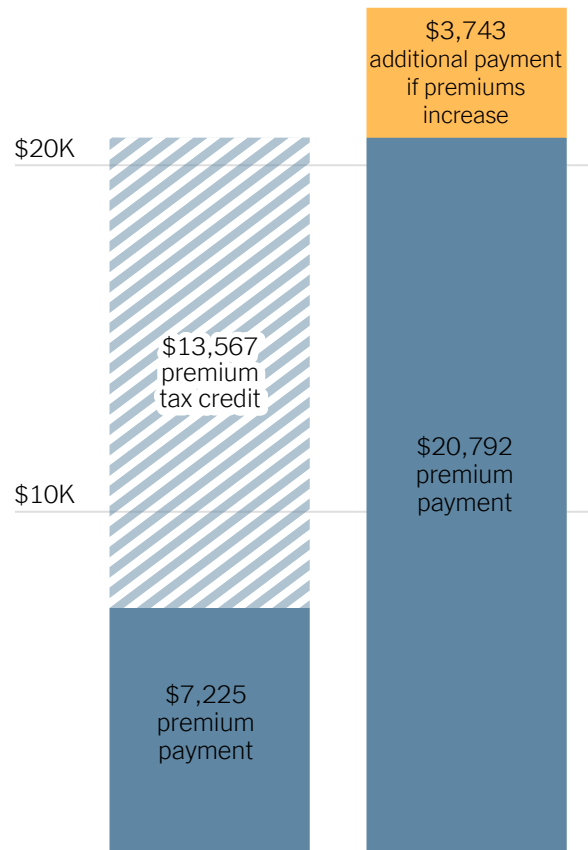
How Much More?

Distribution of proposed 2026 premium rate changes among 312 Obamacare insurers



Annual premium payment for a benchmark Obamacare plan

For the average 55-year-old couple making \$85,000





Source: KFF • By The New York Times

Even upper-income Americans who buy insurance on the Affordable Care Act exchanges will be hurt by the repeal of this tax break. That's because as coverage gets more expensive, healthier people drop their insurance first, forcing companies to raise premiums on their remaining customers to maintain profitability.

And those increases will be big. Premiums are expected to soar an additional 18 percent, based on the planned rate increases insurers have filed (assuming the loss of the break). That compares with a 7 percent increase imposed a year ago.

Thanks to Republican legislators, a 55-year-old couple making \$85,000 annually could see their health insurance cost more than triple, to \$24,535 a year. Obviously that's unaffordable, which is why so many will drop coverage.

And that will just add to the tragedy of tens of millions of Americans lacking what should be a basic benefit in the richest country in the world. Whether you agree with a shutdown or not, it's good to understand that it's not over nothing.

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