



Subscribe to the
Press Herald
Podcast

OPINION

Posted February 22 | Updated February 22

My Boyhood Home of Rumford

Making sure that they keep their health care is more important than yet another tax cut for the wealthy.

BY SEVERIN BELIVEAU SPECIAL TO THE PRESS HERALD

Share      Comment

Like a lot of inland paper mill towns, my boyhood home of Rumford has seen better days. Nearly [one in four residents there](#) lives in poverty – that’s about twice the poverty rate for the rest of Maine.

With so many families struggling to pay their bills, the Affordable Care Act (also known as Obamacare) has offered life-saving assistance. But Republicans in Congress want to repeal it. In the process, they would give big tax breaks to wealthy households in Portland and other communities along the coast.

Mine is one of those wealthy households. But I’m not celebrating. I believe that making sure working families keep their health care is more important than giving another tax cut to the well-to-do like me.

But with Rumford’s paper mill employing just a fifth of the workers it did when I was a kid, many families there depend on subsidies offered by the ACA to afford health insurance. Thanks to those subsidies, as well as an expansion of Medicaid (which Maine has unwisely rejected), nearly [20 million Americans have gained health coverage](#) since 2010, including tens of thousands in Maine.

But President Trump and the Republicans in Congress want to reverse that progress. According to [a recent Congressional Budget Office study](#), repealing the ACA would cost 32 million Americans their health insurance by 2026. Within just the first two years of an ACA repeal, [95,000 Mainers would lose health coverage](#).

Meanwhile, [taxes on the superwealthy would go down](#). Families making more than \$700,000 a year – the famous 1 percent – would see their tax bills cut by \$33,000, on average. The top 0.1 percent – with annual incomes over \$3.7 million – would get a \$200,000 tax break, on average. The 400 richest Americans – with incomes averaging more than \$300 million per year – would have their taxes slashed by [\\$7 million](#), on average.

How does depriving working families’ health coverage cut rich people’s taxes? The ACA is largely funded by taxes on

[↙ CONTINUE READING](#)



Podcast: Bruce Poliquin's vote, time zone shuffle, and the Katahdin monument

The group discusses why Rep. Bruce Poliquin kept his vote on the AHCA secret until game time.

MORE LIKE THIS



NEWS

Republican health plan: How much the rich would gain and the elderly poor would lose



NATION & WORLD

Republicans unveil bill to dismantle Obamacare, with fewer likely insured



EDITORIALS

Our View: Anti-Obamacare fog still hovers over D.C.



LETTERS

Letter to the editor: Republicans targeting ACA to protect wealth of the rich



POLITICS

New Trump administration could have broad impact on Maine

MAINE VOICES LIVE



☰ Portland Press Herald ^

VARSITY MAINE
Comprehensive High School Sports Coverage 