



# Health Reform Roundtable

*A Project of Convergence  
Center for Policy Resolution*

## For Immediate Release

June 26, 2017

Contact: Caryn Hederman  
[caryn@convergencepolicy.org](mailto:caryn@convergencepolicy.org)

## Health-Reform Principles That Can Cross Party Lines

Washington, DC | June 26, 2017 – The Health Reform Roundtable, a diverse group of health care policy experts from across the political spectrum, is proposing opportunities for bipartisan agreement on subsidies for health care coverage and on Medicaid. In their [op-ed in the Wall Street Journal](#), the Roundtable proposes the following recommendations:

- **Subsidies should be available to help those who need help to purchase adequate insurance.** Greater subsidies should be offered to those who can least afford the cost of insurance premiums.
- **The existing tax exclusion for employer-sponsored health insurance should have reasonable limits.**
- **States should be given greater flexibility** to coordinate and streamline coverage options in Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program, and other publicly supported insurance so families can obtain the coverage that best suits their circumstances and serves their needs.
- **Use of Medicaid waivers should be subject to real safeguards.** Funds for health-care services must not be diverted from the current purposes of promoting health and providing health care services to spending for other purposes. Funding for low-income populations must not be diverted to cover higher-income individuals.

The Roundtable believes these propositions deserve support transcending partisanship and ideology. They are intended to ensure adequate help is provided to those in greatest need.

"Roundtable members with vastly differing views have done a remarkable job finding common ground on crucial issues now before Congress. We hope they will continue to generate ideas that lead to wise and durable improvements in the American health care system." ~ Robert J. Fersh, President and Founder, Convergence Center for Policy Resolution.

The Health Reform Roundtable is convened by [Convergence Center for Policy Resolution](#), Convergence is a Washington, DC-based non-profit organization that convenes people and groups

Convergence Center for Policy Resolution • 1133 19<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 410 • Washington, DC • 20036  
[facebook.com/ConvergenceCtr](https://facebook.com/ConvergenceCtr) • [www.convergencepolicy.org](http://www.convergencepolicy.org) • [@ConvergenceCtr](https://twitter.com/ConvergenceCtr)

with divergent views to build trust, identify solutions, and form alliances for action on critical national issues.

Roundtable organizers Ron Pollack and Gail Wilensky asked Convergence to convene some of the leading health care analysts and thinkers on the right and left in a “strange bedfellows” effort to develop widely supportable, consensus ideas for Congress and the administration to consider as they deliberate on health care reform. The Health Reform Roundtable began meeting in March 2017.

### **Op-Ed Authors\***

**Joseph Antos**, is a Resident Scholar and the Wilson H. Taylor Scholar in Health Care and Retirement Policy at American Enterprise Institute

**Stuart Butler** is a Senior Fellow at Brookings Institution

**Lanhee Chen** is the David and Diane Steffy Research Fellow, Hoover Institution, and director of domestic policy studies in the Public Policy Program at Stanford University

**John McDonough** is Professor of Practice at Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health

**Ron Pollack** is the Former Founding Executive Director and Chair Emeritus of Families USA

**Sara Rosenbaum** is the Harold and Jane Hirsh Professor of Health Law and Policy, Milken Institute School of Public Health, George Washington University

**Grace-Marie Turner** is President of Galen Institute

**Gail Wilensky** is a Senior Fellow at Project HOPE

\*Roundtable members have joined in their individual capacities with institutional affiliations provided for identification purposes only.

### **Reflections from Roundtable Participants**

"It is heartening that health thought leaders across the ideological spectrum believe special help and protections must be provided to people with greatest economic needs. This should be a bipartisan imperative. We must ensure that families with limited incomes receive the care they need to remain or become healthy." ~ Ron Pollack, Former Founding Executive Director, now Chair Emeritus, Families USA.

“These days it's remarkable for people with this diversity of views on health care to join together in such a public statement. But we have shown it can be done if there is trust and honest dialogue. We hope and intend that this op-ed will have a substantive and constructive impact on the congressional health care debate.” ~ Stuart Butler, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institution.

"Many of the recommendations in this statement address issues that experts across the ideological spectrum have supported for many years. We hope this statement will be helpful to policymakers in showing where there is convergence to help advance the health policy conversation in making much needed improvements to our health sector." ~ Grace-Marie Turner, President, Galen Institute.