

Under the GOP's health plan, sexual assault would be considered a preexisting condition



After failing to bring their Affordable Care Act replacement to a vote [in March](#), GOP legislators have come armed with a new health care plan that may be even more heartless than their last.

According to [Raw Story](#), the bill's recently added MacArthur Meadows Amendment would ditch the [ACA's protections](#) for preexisting conditions — sexual assault being one of them.

Under the amendment, states would have the all-clear to waive the ban preventing insurance companies from denying coverage to patients based on preexisting conditions. That means companies can also deny preventive health care services, like mammograms and gynecological exams, to these patients, which sexual assault survivors in particular rely on following an attack.

In 2010, before the ACA became law, the [Huffington Post](#) reported the story of Christina Turner, a 45-year-old woman who had been turned away by her insurance company because she'd been raped.

After being drugged and sexually assaulted, Turner's doctor prescribed her a month's worth of anti-AIDS medication, just in case. Though it turned out Turner hadn't been infected with the virus after all, when a prospective insurer saw the prescription on her health record, the company said it wouldn't cover her until — "[in three or more years](#)" — she proved she was still AIDS-free.

It's not just sexual assault that would be considered a preexisting condition under the GOP's plan.

Other gender-based conditions like [postpartum depression](#), being a survivor of domestic violence or having gotten a C-section are also considered preexisting conditions.

"Most of the people who have C-sections identify as women, so that's a shorthand for a gender discriminatory policy," Physicians for Reproductive Health advocacy fellow Dr. Diane Horvath-Casper told *Elle*.

Yet, somehow, the language of the MacArthur Meadows Amendment itself denies that any of its measures are discriminatory. "Nothing in this Act shall be construed as permitting health insurance issuers to discriminate in rates for health insurance coverage by gender," the amendment reads, maintaining it doesn't actually "limit access to health coverage for individuals with preexisting conditions."

Horvath-Casper begs to differ.

"I see the benefits of ACA every single day," she told *Elle*. "I saw patients in my practice who had not been able to get health insurance for five, 10 years finally come in and get care because they could finally afford the premiums, or get maternity coverage."

She added, "A majority of people who get pregnant identify as women, so that's gender discrimination, straight up."