

Date: December 5, 2017

To: SPTA and Division Federal Advocacy Coordinators, and APAGS Coordinators

From: Doug Walter, J.D., Associate Executive Director for Government Relations,  
American Psychological Association Practice Organization

Cc: Katherine Nordal, Ph.D., Executive Director for Professional Practice  
SPTA Directors of Professional Affairs  
SPTA Executive Directors  
CAPP  
APAPO Board of Directors

Re: Congress moves to Conference on Tax Reform

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Early Saturday morning the Senate voted to pass major tax reform legislation by a vote of 51-49. Congress is now beginning conference committee work to resolve differences between the House and Senate versions, with a goal of passing a final version of the legislation within days.

The bills include provisions that APA and APAPO strongly oppose because of their adverse effect on both psychologists and consumer access to mental health and substance use treatment. The Senate bill would repeal the Affordable Care Act's (ACA) individual mandate and cut Medicare spending by 4% each year for the next ten years, starting with a cut of roughly \$25 billion in 2018. The Congressional Budget Office projects that eliminating the ACA's requirement that most individuals obtain health insurance would cause average premiums in the individual market to jump 10%, resulting in the loss of coverage for millions of Americans. The cuts to Medicare are the results the bill's increase to the federal deficit, which triggers automatic budget constraints established under the Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (PAYGO).

The House bill cuts several programs aiding psychologists in graduate school and others pursuing higher education, including the Student Loan Interest Deduction, which allows employers to offer employees up to \$5,250 annually in tuition assistance; Qualified Tuition Reduction, which allows educational institutions to provide their employees, spouses or dependents with tuition reductions that are excluded from taxable income; and the Lifetime Learning Tax Credit. These provisions would increase students costs by an estimated \$71.5 billion over the next ten years.

Follow the link, [here](#), to tell your Members of Congress to reject any legislation that contains provisions that repeal the ACA's individual mandate and eliminates critical higher education tax supports. Please be on the lookout for a message from APA CEO Dr. Arthur Evans in the next couple days on the importance of this issue.

For more information, contact APA Practice Organization Government Relations Office at [Pracgovt@apa.org](mailto:Pracgovt@apa.org) or (202) 336-5889. Visit APA Practice Organization on-line at [APAPracticeCentral.org/Advocacy](http://APAPracticeCentral.org/Advocacy).