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## **Letter: Amid COVID-19 Pandemic, 100+ Organizations Urge Officials to Drop Case Threatening the Affordable Care Act**

*Despite unprecedented health and economic crises, Attorney General William Barr and 18 state officials still want the Supreme Court to strike down the entire Affordable Care Act in California v. Texas.*

(Boston, MA -- May 6, 2020) -- Given the enormous challenges posed by the novel coronavirus, Health Law Advocates, the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School (CHLPI), and a broad coalition of over 100 organizations called on officials from 18 states and the Department of Justice to drop their Supreme Court lawsuit imperiling the Affordable Care Act (ACA) [in a letter](#) sent Wednesday.

The Supreme Court is set to review the case, *California v. Texas*, later this year. As part of their challenge to the ACA, the Department of Justice and state attorneys general are asking the Court to invalidate the *entire* law. [Today's letter](#) explains why that outcome would only exacerbate the pandemic—and leave millions without access to care in the midst of an unprecedented health crisis that has already killed more than 71,000 Americans.

Eliminating the ACA now would “prove catastrophic,” writes the coalition of major health care advocates, providers, insurers, and worker organizations. “The United States cannot risk destabilizing its already-strained health care sector by eliminating a deeply-entrenched law that offers important public health benefits. Nor can millions of Americans afford to lose access to COVID-19 treatment, vaccines and health care generally.”

“Ever since the ACA was enacted it has provided enormous health and economic benefits for Massachusetts residents, particularly the population HLA serves, those with very limited income,” said Matt Selig, HLA’s Executive Director. “Eliminating the ACA will also dramatically reduce federal financial support for many states which, in combination with the economic crisis we are now experiencing, will be devastating to states’ budgets and residents.”

“The ACA offers policymakers some of the best public health tools to address this pandemic,” said Robert Greenwald, faculty director of CHLPI and professor of law at Harvard Law School. “Striking down the ACA now would be disastrous. In the interest of safeguarding our nation’s public health and economic future, we strongly urge the challengers to drop their lawsuit.”

The ACA provides health insurance for over 22 million individuals through public marketplaces and expanded Medicaid coverage in 37 states. Even more Americans receive coverage through its provisions protecting those with pre-existing conditions and allowing young adults under the age of 26 to be covered through their parents’ health insurance. With tens of millions losing their jobs, these programs will offer newly-vulnerable Americans avenues to secure health coverage, and as a result access to live-saving medical care that will slow the disease’s spread.

The states challenging the ACA in *California v. Texas* include: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and West Virginia.

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#### [About Health Law Advocates \(HLA\)](#)

HLA is a public interest, non-profit law firm with a mission to use legal advocacy to confront barriers to health care experienced by low-income Massachusetts residents. Each year, HLA provides legal representation for hundreds of clients across all parts of Massachusetts, advocates for policies to improve access to health care in partnership with other advocacy organizations, and promotes health care access through outreach and education programs. HLA was founded in 1996 and is entering its 25<sup>th</sup> year of Fighting for Health Care Justice. [www.healthlawadvocates.org](http://www.healthlawadvocates.org).

#### [About the Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School \(CHLPI\)](#)

The Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation of Harvard Law School (CHLPI) advocates for legal, regulatory, and policy reforms to improve the health of underserved populations, with a focus on the needs of low-income people living with chronic illnesses and disabilities. CHLPI works with consumers, advocates, community-based organizations, health and social services professionals, government officials, and others to expand access to high-quality health care; to reduce health disparities; to develop community advocacy capacity; and to promote more equitable and effective health care systems. CHLPI is a clinical teaching program of Harvard Law School and mentors students to become skilled, innovative, and thoughtful practitioners as well as leaders in health and public health law and policy. For more information, visit <http://www.chlpi.org>.