

U.S. Congresswoman Emily Randall (D, WA-06)

Special Order Hour on the Affordable Care Act Tax Credit Extension Vote

January 8, 2026

[\[Video\]](#)

Rep. Randall: Thank you, Representative Rivas. I'm glad to be here together on the house floor today, leading a conversation about how we fix our broken health care system.

Across our country, working families are feeling the pain of rising costs from every direction. Donald Trump and Congressional Republicans have failed the American people. They promised to lower costs, and instead, costs keep going up. Housing is more expensive, electricity bills are through the roof, childcare costs keep rising.

And now Republican leadership who love to extend tax breaks for billionaires are making things worse by for months, refusing to extend the affordable care act's tax credits for regular people. These tax credits, which expired on December 31st, could have been continued had Republicans not skipped every opportunity to prevent it. But they chose to walk away from the negotiating table.

Let's be clear about why these tax credits exist. They were created because the U.S. has the most expensive health care system in the world, and without help, millions of working families are simply unable to afford coverage. This was never a handout. It was a lifeline. But because Republicans refused to act before December 31st, millions of Americans have faced skyrocketing health care costs.

In my district, I hear from neighbors every day about how devastating it has been to lose these tax credits. Right now, families who rely on the ACA in Washington's 6th are facing an average of \$1,500 of an increase in a month -- in monthly health care costs. That's some people's rent, three car payments. That's the ability to put anything away in savings. Even if you're on private insurance, monthly costs are estimated to rise across the board by 21% in Washington because of the overall strain on our system.

When healthy people are priced out of insurance, costs go up for everyone else. That's just math. This Republican created crisis will price out an estimated 80,000 Washingtonians from coverage, and that doesn't even include the millions more in Washington and across the country who are losing care because of the cuts to Medicaid and Medicare.

Who's being hit hardest when these tax credits disappear?

Women -- who are already struggling with restrictions to reproductive care, who make less money than men do, and who are on the front lines of the growing childcare crisis.

Who else will be impacted? LGBTQ Americans who are more likely to rely on the ACA because of lower incomes and employment discrimination — on top of this administration rapidly stripping away access to their life saving care and protections.

And families really struggling to get by, living paycheck to paycheck. They're more likely to work jobs without employer provided benefits, making the ACA their only real option for coverage.

I want to make this clear Republican leadership let tax credits expire in order to pay for tax breaks for billionaires.

They didn't make an abstract budget decision. They decided that their wealthy and well-connected donors deserve the very best this country has to offer, while condemning everyday Americans to lose health insurance and have to wait until they're sick enough to end up in the emergency room.

And I'll say what we all know, we don't have a genuine health care system in this country. We have a sick care system, a system where people are forced to delay care until a problem becomes a crisis. A system where chronic conditions go unmanaged or managed with unprescribed medication.

A system where cancers are caught later when treatment is more expensive and outcomes are worse. A system where more people die.

One thing drove me to public service and has continued to drive me.

Everyone deserves access to health care.

That's why in the state legislature, I worked every day to protect and expand access to care, passing laws to expand postpartum Medicaid so new parents receive the care they need after childbirth, establishing a universal health care commission, removing barriers to behavioral health and dental care, and lowering prescription drug prices.

I've seen the way families thrive when access to care is expanded and the devastation that follows when it's taken away.

While families are worried about whether they can afford insulin, inhalers or mental health care, Republican leadership chose inaction. They found time to give tax breaks to corporations, but not to protect health care for working people before the tax credits expired.

That tells you everything you need to know about Republican leadership priorities.

President Trump says he has concepts of a plan and has been making empty promises for a decade. But the American people don't need concepts. We need affordable health care. Now.

I'm very glad that 17 of my Republican colleagues joined Democrats today in doing the right thing — voting to extend the ACA tax credits for three more years to protect access to affordable health care. And I hope my colleagues in the Senate follow suit by passing this bill immediately.

But I also know that it's not enough. We need a universal health care system, a system where you can go to the doctor, receive the care you need, and walk out without worrying about what other bills you'll have to skip to afford it.

A system where losing a job doesn't mean losing your health care. Where starting a business doesn't mean risking your life, in addition to your livelihood.

Where no one lies awake at night wondering if they'll be able to afford insulin. Whether they'll be able to afford it if their kid breaks their arm. Whether they'll be able to afford it if their spouse has a pregnancy complication or a cancer diagnosis. It's not radical. It's not unrealistic. It's humanity.

And the United States, arguably the wealthiest country in the world, doesn't have a universal health care system like every advanced nation in the world does.

It's time for our nation's leaders to stop making excuses. It's time for us to find real solutions that put the American people first. I yield back to Representative Rivas.