

## Jacked up premiums & chaos? Why your health care is on the line this November

*featuring Anthony Wright,  
Executive Director, Families USA*



## *This time on Code WACK!*

**What's at stake in health care with the upcoming federal election? Would Donald Trump really try to repeal the Affordable Care Act - *again*? Would Kamala Harris continue fighting to rein in the skyrocketing cost of medicine? **What will be the fate of Biden-era policies** like enhanced tax credits limiting the cost of health insurance premiums? Or access to reproductive health care (including contraception)?**

With so much up in the air, how is [Families USA](#), a leading national, non-partisan voice for healthcare consumers, responding? To find out, we spoke to **Anthony Wright**, Families USA's new executive director. This is the second episode in a two-part series.

## **SHOW NOTES**

## **WE DISCUSS**

## *With the presidential election looming ahead, what issues should be top of mind when it comes to our health care?*

“We’re concerned about the future of the Affordable Care Act and all of the key protections that are within it, or people with preexisting conditions, the additional coverage that people have for literally 45 million Americans that are dependent on it and all the other safeguards. We know that there is a big issue in contrast with regard to reproductive health care and access to abortion and other treatments and reproductive care.

“Within the Affordable Care Act space, there is the debate around what we do with the enhanced tax credits that provide a guarantee that you don't have to spend more than 8.5% of your income on coverage that is worth hundreds or even thousands of dollars to many people that those premiums will spike if that help is not renewed...

“...Another major contrasting point in this election is around prescription drug prices and the ability to negotiate for the best possible price using the power of Medicare. The Biden/Harris administration just announced the significant \$6 billion in reductions that they were able to negotiate for just the top 10 drugs in Medicare as the start of the new authority that they have under the Inflation Reduction Act. However, there are folks who wish to repeal the [Inflation Reduction Act](#). That's something that's listed in the Heritage Foundation's [Project 2025...](#)” – **Anthony Wright**

## *If the Affordable Care Act is repealed, what can we expect?*

“... I think that is a big concern and one that we should take seriously. It would mean ... the loss of coverage for potentially as many as 45 million people, both in terms of what would be lost in terms of access to Medicaid, but also the additional assistance for people in the exchanges like healthcare.gov that have access regardless of preexisting conditions that get financial help.

“...And if that financial help goes away, that also means that *even those people who are not directly helped by the Affordable Care Act*, they'll be in a health insurance pool that will be smaller and sicker, which means premiums will be jacked up anyway, and that will have [resounding] effects to people's access to get the care and coverage they need. So it really would create chaos in our healthcare system...” - **Anthony Wright**

### ***When it comes to healthcare advocacy, what obstacles are faced by organizations like Families USA?***

“[There’s] the question of industry influence in our health policy decisions, whether it's the drug companies or the hospitals or the health plans or other parts of our healthcare system, medical groups, et cetera. These are well-funded parts of our health system that have very large megaphones and so it's hard to move [an] agenda on behalf of patients, especially that might threaten those profits in our health system. And so we need to have more robust advocacy so that we can counter, again, something basic like the ability to negotiate for the best price for prescription drugs or making sure that hospital pricing is fair and not inflated and irrational.

“...And that's why we need robust consumer, patient and public advocacy that Families USA has been doing and will continue to do.” - **Anthony Wright**

## **Helpful Links**

[Families USA, The Voice for Healthcare Consumers](#)

[Unraveling the Mysteries of Biden vs. Trump on Health Care, KFF](#)

[Health care under Harris versus Trump: A public health historian sizes up their records](#), *The Conversation*

[Healthcare Accomplishments Tracker](#), *Protect Our Care*

[Inflation Reduction Act, One-Page Summary](#), *Senate Democrats*

[Project 2025, Presidential Transition Project](#), *The Heritage Foundation*

## Episode Transcript

Read the [episode transcript](#).

## Guest Biography - Anthony Wright

[Anthony E. Wright](#) (He, Him) is Families USA's Executive Director. Before joining the organization, he served 22 years as Executive Director of Health Access California, the statewide health care consumer advocacy coalition. Under Wright's leadership, Health Access California led state efforts to win patient protections, fight budget cuts, invest in the safety net, expand coverage, and advance equity and prevention.

He led California's coalition effort to help pass and later defend the Affordable Care Act, and for state policies to implement and improve the law to attain the biggest drop of the uninsured rate in the nation. He was responsible for numerous successful health care advocacy efforts to pass critical health reforms—such as nation-leading laws to stop surprise medical bills, ensure timely

access to care, stop hospitals overcharging, and expand Medicaid regardless of age, assets, or immigration status.

A consumer advocate and community organizer quoted widely in state and national media, Wright's background also includes working for New Jersey Citizen Action, the Center for Media Education, The Nation magazine, and at the White House in Vice President Al Gore's office. Raised in the Bronx, he graduated from Amherst College magna cum laude in both English and Sociology.

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