

Subject **From the Desk of Congresswoman Laurel Lee**
From Congresswoman Laurel Lee <RepLaurelLeeFL15@mail.house.gov>
To Mr. Gordon Wayne W. Watts <gordon@contractwithamerica2.com>
Date 2026-03-06 10:58



LAUREL M. LEE
15TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
VICE CHAIR

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS
CHAIRWOMAN

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
2464 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TEL: (202) 225-5626

DISTRICT OFFICE:
14025 RIVEREDGE DR, SUITE 105
TAMPA, FL 33637
TEL: (813) 393-5077

March 6, 2026

Dear Mr. Watts,

Thank you for contacting my office to share your concerns about the expiration of the Affordable Care Act enhanced premium tax credits (EPTCs). I appreciate your engagement and the opportunity to respond.

The EPTCs were enacted as a temporary policy, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, through the 2021 American Rescue Plan Act and later extended in the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act. These subsidies were designed to provide short-term relief during a national public health emergency that has since passed. The EPTCs were designed to be temporary measures, not a permanent feature of our healthcare system. Permanently extending these COVID-era subsidies does not address the underlying drivers of rising health care costs. Instead, it masks affordability problems while adding hundreds of billions of dollars to the burden on American taxpayers.

Despite promises to make health care more affordable, costs have continued to rise under the Affordable Care Act. Since its enactment, premiums have increased by roughly 80 percent, and more than 150 rural hospitals have closed nationwide. Rather than advancing meaningful reforms to lower costs for working families, Democrats have repeatedly favored pouring more taxpayer dollars into a system that has been shown to be vulnerable to waste, fraud, and abuse.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has confirmed these concerns. In recent analysis, the GAO found that 100 percent of fraudulent applications were approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services as recently as 2024. Alarming, 90 percent of those fake applicants continued receiving coverage into 2025. In addition, during 2023 alone, more than 58,000 Social Security numbers belonging to deceased individuals were used to receive ACA subsidies. For approximately 26,000 of those cases, taxpayers paid more than \$94 million to health insurance companies in a single year. A system that

cannot identify when taxpayer dollars are being paid on behalf of deceased individuals is clearly in need of reform.

In December 2025, the House passed H.R. 6703, the *Lower Health Care Premiums for All Americans Act*, which takes a comprehensive approach to reducing health care costs by expanding choice, increasing competition, and lowering premiums for working families and small businesses. The bill allows small businesses and self-employed individuals to form Association Health Plans to access more affordable coverage, while protecting employer-sponsored insurance and preserving access to stop-loss insurance so job creators can better manage high-cost medical claims. It strengthens Custom Health Option and Individual Care Expense (CHOICE) Arrangements by allowing employers to provide flexible, tax-advantaged health benefits directly to workers, helping many businesses offer health coverage for the first time. The legislation also lowers prescription drug costs by increasing transparency and accountability for pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs), empowering employers to negotiate better prices for medications. Finally, it properly funds cost-sharing reductions, lowering ACA Marketplace premiums by approximately 11 percent—nearly double the reduction achieved by extending temporary COVID-era subsidies.

Together, these reforms would save patients as much as \$1,871 per year while reducing federal spending by more than \$36 billion over the next decade. Additionally, I have supported *H.R.3514 - Improving Seniors' Timely Access to Care Act of 2025*, which would streamline prior authorization in Medicare Advantage, ensuring seniors can get timely access to the care they need by establishing a process for electronic prior authorization and holding insurers accountable for delays.

It is an honor to represent you in the U.S. House of Representatives. Please don't hesitate to reach out with your thoughts and concerns, and feel free to stay connected with my office through our [newsletter](#) or on [X](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

Sincerely,



Laurel M. Lee
Member of Congress