But in the middle of a pandemic and economic crisis, Gonzales' plan would kick Texans off their health insurance including young mothers, those with asthma, diabetes, cancer or even those recovering from the coronavirus.

NYT: The Coronavirus Pandemic Has Taken A Toll On The U.S. Economy, Wiping Away Nearly Five Years Of Growth An Dropping The Gross Domestic Product 9.5 Percent In The Second Quarter. “The coronavirus pandemic’s toll on the nation’s economy became emphatically clearer Thursday as the government detailed the most devastating three-month collapse on record, which wiped away nearly five years of growth. Gross domestic product, the broadest measure of goods and services produced, fell 9.5 percent in the second quarter of the year as consumers cut back spending, businesses pared investments and global trade dried up, the Commerce Department said. The drop — the equivalent of a 32.9 percent annual rate of decline — would have been even more severe without trillions of dollars in government aid to households and businesses. […] A surge in coronavirus cases and deaths across the country has led to a renewed pullback in economic activity, reflecting consumer unease and renewed shutdowns. And much of the government support is on the verge of running out, with Washington at an impasse over next steps.” [New York Times, 7/30/20]

Gonzales Wanted To Eliminate The Affordable Care Act. Q: “How would you promote healthcare coverage that is adequate, affordable and accessible for all?” GONZALES: “By eliminating Obama Care ( ACA ) we need to move back towards a free market system that allows health care companies to properly compete against each other for free enterprise and competitive rates. The exponential rise in healthcare costs for citizens is unacceptable and we need to return back to free enterprise. Pre existing conditions will be covered to ensure that citizens are covered and not left between the cracks.” [iVoterGuide – Candidate Questionnaire: Tony Gonzales, accessed 8/22/20]

The Affordable Care Act Prevented Insurers From Denying Coverage Or Charging More If An Individual Had A Pre-Existing Condition. “In the old days, insurance companies had ways to avoid selling policies to people who were likely to cost more than insurers wanted to spend. They might deny them coverage outright, or exclude coverage for a known condition, or charge so much that insurance became unaffordable. The Affordable Care Act boxes out the old insurance practices with a package of legal moves. First, it says point-blank that carriers ‘may not impose any preexisting condition exclusion.’ It backs that up with another section that says they ‘may not establish rules for eligibility’ based on health status, medical condition, claims experience or medical history.” [Politifact, 10/17/18]

2017: Repeal Could Have Denied Coverage To As Many As 133 Million Americans. “This analysis updates that earlier study. It confirms that a large fraction of non-elderly Americans have pre-existing health conditions: at least 23 percent of Americans (61 million people) using a narrow definition based on eligibility criteria for pre-ACA state high-risk pools, or as many as 51 percent (133 million people) using a broader definition closer to the underwriting criteria used by insurers prior to the ACA. Any of these 133 million Americans could have been denied coverage, or offered coverage only at an exorbitant price, had they needed individual market health insurance before 2014.” [HHS.gov, Issue Brief, 1/5/17]

The ACA Prohibited Insurers From Denying Or Charging More For Coverage Due To Pregnancy Or Previous Cesarean Section, Which Were Previously Considered Pre-existing Conditions. “Before Obamacare made coverage guaranteed issue, pregnancy itself was also considered a pre-existing condition that would prevent an expectant parent — male or female — from obtaining coverage in all but five states. And many individual health insurance carriers considered a previous cesarean section to be a reason to decline an application or charge a higher initial premium. (in Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Vermont, state regulations prevented carriers from using medical underwriting to determine eligibility for coverage, long before this became the norm under the ACA). [HealthInsurance.org, 10/16/18]

Asthma, Diabetes And Cancer Were Considered Pre-Existing Conditions. “Health insurers can no longer charge more or deny coverage to you or your child because of a pre-existing health condition like asthma, diabetes, or cancer.” [HHS.gov, Pre-Existing Conditions, 1/31/17]
COVID-19 Could Be Considered A Pre-Existing Condition Without The Affordable Care Act, Stamping Individuals Who Contracted The Virus As “Uninsurable.” “COVID-19 could have stamped a person ‘uninsurable’ if not for the Affordable Care Act. The ban on insurers using preexisting conditions to deny coverage is a key part of the Obama-era law that the Trump administration still seeks to overturn. Without the law, people who recovered from COVID-19 and tried to purchase an individual health insurance policy could be turned down, charged higher premiums or have follow-up care excluded from coverage. Those considered vulnerable because of conditions such as respiratory problems or early-stage diabetes would have run into a wall of insurer suspicion.”
[Associated Press, 5/3/20]