

# OPINION

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## A call for prayers and peace in Pittsburgh

**It's time for Dr. King's non-violence philosophy to be instituted around the world**  
**ATLANTA** - Dr. Charles Steele, Jr., president and CEO of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), issued the following statement in response to the tragic shooting at a Pittsburgh synagogue that claimed the lives of 11 people and injured six other individuals. Dr. Steele called for prayers for everyone touched by the senseless massacre, and he called for peace, not only in Pittsburgh and America, but around the world. He said it is time for the non-violence philosophy implemented by the SCLC's co-founder and first president, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to be instituted around the world. "With the tragic shooting in Pittsburgh, and the daily violence we are seeing in America and around the world, it is evident that this hate and violence is escalating. That is why the SCLC - as part of its Poor People's Campaign - is promoting the Kingian Non-violence Philosophy. It needs to be implemented in all educational institutions and religious forms of training. We must teach it from elementary schools to colleges awarding PhDs, in the form of classroom instruction, workshops, and symposiums, all aspects of training. We need to incorporate the Kingian philosophy of peace and non-violence. Dr. King said the three ills of society are racism, poverty and militarism. Dr. King and others fought and died to end these practices. The only way to address this hate and violence is



to institutionalize Dr. King's philosophy throughout our society and in academic teachings around the world." In response to why are we seeing so much hate and violence in our society, Dr. Steele added, "One reason it is happening is because of our nation's political leaders. Everything builds and deals around the leadership, especially when the leadership encourages people to be violent and when they accept violence as a norm in the culture. What we are experiencing today is a reverberation. If you throw it out, it is going to come back. This

is what we are experiencing in this relationship with the current leader, No. 45. It is a shame that people in positions of power for what many refer to as the most powerful country's in the world have the tendency to encourage discriminatory practices that lead to violence. Non-violence is always the answer. Violence has no place within our society. That is the third ill that Dr. King talked about, but when you put together racism, poverty and violence then it is a situation where you can't avoid an explosion. Dr. King said the bombs that drop in Vietnam will one day explode in America. Not only are they exploding in America, but they are exploding all over the world, and America should be the leader and take the lead when it comes to peace and non-violence protests." **ABOUT THE SCLC:** Established in 1957, the SCLC, whose first president was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is a now an international organization made up of chapters and affiliates with programs that affect the lives of all Americans: north, south, east, and west. Its sphere of influence and interests has become international in scope because the human rights movement transcends national boundaries. For additional information about the SCLC, visit [www.nationalsclc.org](http://www.nationalsclc.org). To arrange an interview with Dr. Steele, contact Jerry Thomas at [jerry@jerrythomaspr.com](mailto:jerry@jerrythomaspr.com), or (312) 285-5166, or Maynard Eaton, National Communications Director, (404) 254-8322. [eaton.maynard@gmail.com](mailto:eaton.maynard@gmail.com) or [meaton@nationalsclc.org](mailto:meaton@nationalsclc.org).

## Healthcare: what is at stake in this election

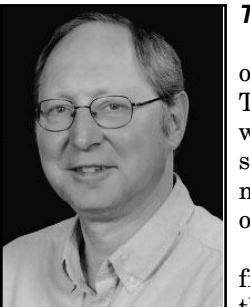


**By Emily Weathers Kennedy**  
 What drives people to the polls varies from age group to age group and state to state. Usually jockeying for the top issue are healthcare, the economy, jobs, and immigration, with healthcare nudging out the others in most polls this election, especially with young Americans. Healthcare is the one issue that keeps families up at night and threatens to

erode any sense of wellbeing, be it physical or financial. What does it matter if your job is secure but you cannot afford lifesaving medical care because you have a pre-existing condition that prices you out of insurance? How do poor migrants from Central America threaten you when you cannot afford critical medicines for your diabetes? If the stock market rises or falls from time to time, why is it important when your accident requires surgery you can't afford? What is ever more important than your child with leukemia and little coverage to save him or her?

**What is at stake with this election?**  
 Since 2011, after regaining control of the House, Republicans have had an obsession with repealing the Affordable Care Act (ACA), dubbed Obamacare, trying and failing 70 times to repeal it. The replacement effort passed through reconciliation legislation (requiring 52 vs 60 votes) in 2017 is comprised of skimpy junk plans with "continuous coverage" wording that have essential health benefits removed. With these junk plans that chip away at Obamacare, people with pre-existing conditions have been threatened by higher premiums (not allowed under Obamacare). According to *Money*, "In effect, under a 'continuous coverage' policy, a person with a pre-existing condition would need to avoid having any gap in insurance coverage in order to avoid paying more for insurance or being denied outright. So if you lose your job and your health coverage, insurers would be able to deny you coverage." Whatever you do, DON'T LOSE YOUR JOB! Scary isn't it? Instead of trying to IMPROVE health care for Americans, Republicans holding both houses of Congress have tried over and over to weaken it. Senator Mitch McConnell has stated recently that if Republicans retain control, they will try again to repeal Obamacare in 2019 in addition to reducing programs Americans hold most dear: Medicare and Social Security.

## Space Force: Boon or boondoggle?



**Tyrades! by Danny Tyree**  
 When I was a preschooler, one of my favorite Saturday morning TV programs was "Fireball XL5," which followed the missions of spaceship Fireball XL5, commanded by Colonel Steve Zodiac of the World Space Patrol. I've enjoyed a lot of science fiction movies and series since then, but "Fireball" always held a special place in my heart. I was

excited to share reruns with my son, and even more excited to hear that the United States is proceeding with plans for a Space Force -- a military branch for protecting the nation's interests beyond earth (satellite security, missile defense, mineral rights, unobstructed moon exposure for endangered werewolves, etc.) If Congress is willing to fund the program ("You mean my platinum health insurance might be endangered if a mile-wide asteroid hits D.C.? Let's fund the thing!"), the Space Force would be our first new armed service since 1947. Despite my enthusiasm, I can understand why this leaves people with mixed emotions. On one hand, it's inspirational that today's young people would have the opportunity to get in on the ground floor (so to speak) of a brand-new service. On the other hand, it's disheartening that a large percentage of civics-challenged citizens probably couldn't name all the EXISTING armed services. ("Um, the Army, the Navy...the Junior Woodchucks...Hogan's Heroes...the Baker Street Irregulars...that's SEVEN. Okay, I'm math-challenged, too.")

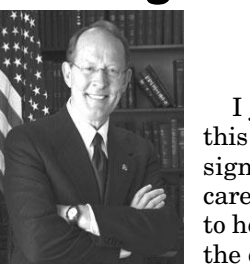
Here's a thought: Congress should stop propping up health insurance and medical equipment providers, pharmaceutical companies, and those in the medical community charging outrageous fees for services. Obamacare wasn't perfect, but it was on the right track and only needed congressional support to fix issues and keep costs down. What it didn't need was sabotage. Please don't take my word for the threat to healthcare, Medicare, and Social Security. DO YOUR OWN RESEARCH. And for heaven's sakes, take pre-election promises by Republicans to protect pre-existing conditions with a grain of salt. Actions speak louder than words! **VOTE** as if your health depends on it!

The proposed Space Force still faces a multitude of hurdles. One of the first necessities is to establish a military chain-of-command structure that would govern day-to-day operations and ensure integration with other branches. That way, when a Little Green Man orders, "Take me to your leader," there wouldn't be any confusion, other than "GREEN men? Are they privileged or not privileged? If the latter, are Frisbees a cultural appropriation of flying saucers?" Another priority is drawing up rules of engagement that detail circumstances under which we would interact with enemies in orbit or on the moon. If we allow enlisted personnel too much leeway, we might hear, "Some Norwegian bureaucrat was ruining Sinatra's 'Fly Me to The Moon' on karaoke night. Prepare to target laser beams..." We need to nip potential cost overruns in the bud. Admittedly, it was not encouraging to overhear a member of the military-industrial complex chortle, "In space, no one can hear you overcharge for toilet seats and hammers." Likewise, it worried me when preliminary budget talks were interrupted by shouts of "To infinity -- and beyond!" I'm sure recruiters could find lots of adventurous young men and women who would sign up for an initial tour of duty. Reenlistment might be a problem, once reality sank in with the starry-eyed dreamers. ("When they talked about serving on the moon, I thought we'd be filming it out in the desert somewhere!") Will the Veterans Administration be able to handle all the unexpected health issues that might arise? Will long waiting lists get even longer? ("When I first came to the waiting room with minor issues, I was Second Lieutenant Stanford, retired. Now I'm Spaaaaace Ghoooooost!") I hope you'll remain vigilant, offer advice and generally do your part to make this work out for the good old U.S. of A. Even Steve Zodiac might take a more nationalistic view nowadays. ("My one-world-government paycheck bounced again! Let's dump those freeloading diplomats out the cargo bay and take the mayor of Gary, Indiana out for a Martian steak!")

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## New legislation will help Tennessee fight the opioid crisis



**By U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander (R-Maryville)**  
 I joined President Donald Trump this week at the White House as he signed the most important health care law this year -- a bill I sponsored to help Tennessee fight back against the opioid crisis.

25 million who really hurt because they have chronic pain—they need help, and we need more effective medicines and treatments for pain. A non-addictive painkiller could really be the "Holy Grail" of solving the opioid crisis. And fifth, this bill will help reduce the influx of deadly illegal drugs at the border like fentanyl -- a white powder that is 50 times stronger than other opioids -- from coming from China to America by mail. A drug enforcement agent from Tennessee described to me what had happened when he seized some fentanyl. This experienced law enforcement officer told me that just by opening a small plastic bag containing the white powder, he was almost overcome and had to leave the room to avoid passing out. That is how dangerous fentanyl is, and why it's important we keep it off our streets and out of our communities.

Sen. McConnell, from Kentucky, has called the bill "landmark legislation," and I believe he is right. In our state, as in most states, more people are killed by drug overdoses than by car crashes—1,776 Tennesseans died last year alone. Here are five specific ways this new law will help Tennesseans: It will extend support for Medicaid patients seeking treatment for substance use disorders from 15 to 30 days; help increase services for babies born in opioid withdrawal; help our state reach out and intervene early in the lives of Tennessee children who have experienced trauma; and speed up the development of new non-addictive painkillers. There are 100 million Americans living with some pain, and there are

The new law represents the work of eight committees in the House and five committees in the Senate who have worked together across party lines to help address this crisis that is hurting virtually every American community. There has been a bipartisan sense of urgency that we do this well and that we do

### First Amendment

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Lawrence County

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