



July 15, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives

Madam Speaker:

In a press conference Monday, you noted that “in fairness to Republicans” it was necessary to release the House Democrats’ health care bill yesterday so that we can review and comment on it.

We very much appreciate this new-found commitment to fairness and ask that you demonstrate this by ensuring the Committees of jurisdiction are given adequate time and resources to review, analyze and modify this legislation. That includes making sure that the expertise of non-partisan experts, notably the staff of the Congressional Budget Office, have time to analyze the actual bill and are made available to all Committees during this entire process.

An independent analysis has shown the bill would force 2 out of 3 Americans to lose their current health care coverage and that the mandates and taxes to pay for this \$1.5 trillion bill could cost 5 million Americans their jobs. Clearly, CBO’s full and thorough analysis is critical to the House performing its duties on behalf of the American people.

Furthermore, we believe the true costs of this bill are hidden by the budget gimmick included within it. The actual costs of this bill, once it is fully implemented, could exceed \$2 trillion. To finance these changes, the bill include hundreds of billions of dollars in Medicare cuts and over \$500 billion in new taxes, hitting hard small businesses and manufacturers. Clearly, a bill of such importance – impacting not only the health of Americans but the health of our economy – cannot and should not be rushed through Congress.

We have an obligation to fully and carefully debate and dissect legislative proposals, particularly those which so fundamentally alter our current health care delivery system. Artificial deadlines for House action, particularly ones that will not be matched by the Senate, threaten to undermine that obligation.


We therefore request that each of the three Committees that have jurisdiction over this legislation be scheduled to debate the measure sequentially, not concurrently. This would allow the non-partisan staff at the Congressional Budget Office to be available at each Committee mark-up to explain how the various elements of the legislation interact and how it could impact:

- The impact on insurance premium prices for families;
- The number of previously insured Americans moving onto Medicaid;
- The short-term and long-term costs;
- The number of seniors who lose their current Medicare health plan;
- The rates of spending growth in federal and non-federal health programs.

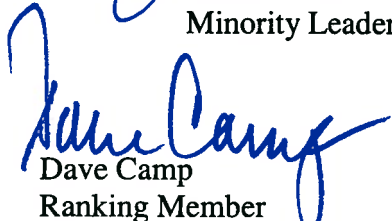
Given the complexity and importance of these issues, it would not be desirable for the Committees to consider this legislation without having the expertise of the Congressional Budget Office available to answer these and other questions.


Health care reform, which Republican are committed to, is too important to get wrong. We look forward to your prompt answer to this request and to working together to craft health care solutions that make quality coverage more affordable for all of our constituents in a way that is fiscally responsible both today and tomorrow.


Sincerely,

  
John Boehner  
Minority Leader

  
Eric Cantor  
Minority Whip

  
Dave Camp  
Ranking Member  
Ways and Means

  
Joe Barton  
Ranking Member  
Energy & Commerce

  
John Kline  
Ranking Member  
Education & Labor

Cc:

Steny Hoyer  
Charles Rangel  
Henry Waxman  
George Miller