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# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

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October 14, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232 Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As you work with the committees that marked up H.R. 3200 to prepare legislation for House consideration, I ask that you do so in an open and transparent process that gives all Members the chance to properly review the final text and prepare and offer amendments. Health care is far too important and complex of an issue to rush to the floor or restrict debate and amendments. Members must be allowed ample time to review the combined bill text, have a full CBO score, and write amendments. I strongly oppose use of reconciliation or other procedures that would shut Members out of this process and limit their ability to represent constituent's viewpoints.

During the August district work period, I spent a large portion of time reading through the details of H.R. 3200 and talking with my constituents about it. I held numerous town hall meetings across the 19<sup>th</sup> District of Texas, and the overwhelming majority of attendees were very concerned about the long term effect this bill will have on the quality of their health care and the financial burden it will impose on Americans today and future generations. I asked my constituents for comments regarding H.R. 3200 and other bills that are being worked on in the House of Representatives; I have attached their responses for your review.

I believe there are several areas where we could work together on health care such as improving coverage to individuals with preexisting conditions. Furthermore, I agree with efforts in H.R.3200 to simplify billing methods and fight Medicaid and Medicare fraud. We can fix problems in our current health care system without creating a new health care system that will force what some experts suggest could be up to 114 million Americans out of their current coverage.

Like my constituents, I am very concerned about a costly government takeover of health care. H.R. 3200, as it stands today, is very cumbersome and counterproductive to President Obama's goal of lowering the overall cost of health care on our country's economy. The Congressional Budget Office has already projected the current bill will cost \$1.042 trillion over 10 years.

I believe there are better alternatives to many of the provisions in H.R. 3200. First, small businesses or people who are self-employed should be allowed to form purchasing groups for health insurance commonly known as Association Health Plans (AHPs). The Lubbock, Texas Chamber of Commerce in my Congressional district has already implemented such a health care plan that now has roughly 10,000 people enrolled, of which 20 percent were previously uninsured. Allowing these types of health care plans at the federal level would undoubtedly help insure more people.

Second, competition in the health care market should be increased by making it easier for people to purchase health insurance across state lines or maintain their health insurance through job changes. Third, the tax code should be made more fair for individuals by allowing them the opportunity to deduct the cost of health insurance the same way employers can. I believe that would be a much better alternative than taxing individuals who do not have insurance. Finally, I believe that including meaningful lawsuit reform like that which has been enacted in Texas would dramatically reduce the cost of malpractice insurance for doctors and the overall cost of health care. In Texas, more than 7,000 new physicians have come to our state since medical malpractice reform was enacted.

If Congress enacts health care reforms, we must ensure that the actions we take now do not make the currently unsustainable federal budget situation even worse and create a larger burden for taxpayers. Health care must proceed through traditional and transparent legislative procedures that offer all Members adequate time to review the bill and offer amendments. Passing a partisan health care plan using budget gimmicks and arcane rules is not what the American people expect of their elected representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Neugebauer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Randy Neugebauer