

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June __, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20502

Dear Mr. President:

We agree with you that our health care system can be improved to better serve the American people. In doing so, however, we should be careful not to make matters worse or damage what works well currently.

During your campaign and as President, you have affirmed your commitment to letting Americans keep their coverage if they like it. We agree wholeheartedly. Survey after survey demonstrates that more than 8 in 10 Americans are happy with their current coverage. These patients should have the choice of keeping their coverage if they like it. However, some in Congress are proposing to undermine the coverage of 180 million Americans by taxing employer-provided health benefits for the first time. Employers have a stake in the health of their workers, and making health care more expensive by taxing employer-provided health care benefits is exactly the wrong thing to do.

Though problems exist in our current third party-controlled system, taxing the health benefits of middle class families to pay for a government takeover of health care will create many more problems than it solves. This proposal will undermine the coverage of every American who currently receives critically necessary health care services through their employer.

Taxing employer-sponsored coverage will radically destabilize the coverage that Americans know and love. By taxing these benefits to expand government control of health care, millions of American workers will lose the coverage they like and want to keep. The consequences are clear: a government-monopoly will be created and will force Americans out of their employer-provided plan. In turn, families will lose access to their primary care doctors, OBGYNs, nurses, pharmacists, hospitals, and labs that they know and trust. This is unacceptable.

There is a clear consensus that health care is in need of reform. Millions of Americans are uninsured for part of the year, and it is increasingly difficult for many to find an affordable health care plan. We stand ready to work with you to find common-sense health care solutions to expand choice, access and coverage, lower cost,

and improve quality. However, we should not reform health care on the backs of America's middle class by taxing employer-sponsored benefits, especially in the midst of a recession.

In accordance with your sensible campaign promise, we ask you to reject any proposal that undermines the health benefits of millions by taxing employer-provided coverage. We look forward to working with you on this issue.

Sincerely,

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Steve Scalise, LA-1

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