

Health Care: Pelosi Rejects Republicans’ “Reach across the Aisle”

On May 13, 2009, Representative John Boehner (R-OH) and eight¹ of his colleagues sent a letter to President Obama that began with this sentence: “We write to you today to express our sincere desire to work with you and find common ground on the issue of health care reform.” The letter outlined three principles² on which the White House *seemed* to agree with them.

The letter was sent, but defeat came in July. House committees – Ways & Means, Energy & Commerce and Education & Labor – considering H.R. 3200, swiftly and concisely rejected the 31 amendments Republicans offered to protect, preserve and improve the world’s best medical care, retain individual freedoms to make personal medical decisions, and limit the inevitable tax increases. Also rejected were amendments protecting the sovereign rights of states and the free enterprise system for employers, individuals, physicians and the private insurance business.

Perhaps the most astonishing section of H.R. 3200 was its obvious disdain for senior citizens. Medicare funding will be drastically cut, while enrollment increases. The result will be rationed care, especially for senior citizens. In addition, every five years (for the unhealthy, every 2 ½ years) senior citizens would submit to mandatory end-of-life counseling, an example of which is, currently, forced on military personnel served by Veterans Administration (VA) hospitals.

Beware! Treatment of Senior Citizens and the Disabled

A survey on page 21 of *Your Life, Your Choices* asks veterans to react to 19 “What makes your life worth living” inquiries and reveal whether it would make life (a) “difficult, but acceptable,” (b) “worth living, but just barely,” (c) “not worth living” or (d) “can’t answer now.”

The veterans’ survey mirrors the mandatory end-of-life counseling senior citizens will face if H.R. 3200 passes. The preceding paragraph explains the veterans’ four choices for ranking themselves on 19 statements. They must check a specific attitude – (a), (b), (c) or (d) listed above – for situations, such as: “I can no longer contribute to my family’s well being. I rely on a feeding tube, dialysis, or breathing machine to keep me alive. I can no longer talk or control my bladder or bowels or recognize family/friends. I live in a nursing home. My situation causes severe emotional burden for my family. I am a severe financial burden on my family.”³

Such behavior modification will be repeated in government-run health care as U.S. citizens of all ages become less productive and are deemed too costly to keep alive.

¹ Joining Rep. Boehner were Representatives Mike Pence (R-IN), John Carter (R-TX), Roy Blunt (R-MO), Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), Eric Cantor (R-V), Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA), Pete Sessions (R-TX), and David Dreier (R-CA)

² (1) Healthcare must be quality, affordable and accessible for Americans, regardless of pre-existing health conditions.
(2) Americans must have the option to keep the employer-based health plan they like and choose their physicians.
(3) Healthcare reform must have effective prevention, wellness, and disease management programs, while developing new treatments and cures for life-threatening diseases.

³ Then, patients are asked: “If you checked ‘worth living, but just barely’ for more than one factor, would a combination of these factors make your life ‘not worth living?’ If so, which factors?” Also, “If you checked ‘not worth living,’ does this mean that you would rather die than be kept alive?” Then, this question, “If you checked ‘can’t answer now,’ what information or people do you need to help you decide?”

31 Rejected Amendments Reveal Government's Plan for YOUR Health

The legalese in the 1,018 pages of H.R. 3200 might conceal the horrors the government-run health plan will thrust upon citizens of the United States, but the 31 “no” votes on the 31 proposed conservative amendments paint a crystal clear picture of the intentions of H.R. 3200.

The Proposed Amendments

Defeated: Three U.S. Congressmen, Paul Ryan (R-WI), Phil Roe (R-TN) and John Kline (R-MN), offered similar amendments to prevent a government-controlled health plan.

So: The federal government will create a government-run health insurance plan to compete with and undercut private companies that must make a profit to remain in business.

Defeated: Rep. Phil Gingrey, M.D. (R-GA) proposed an amendment to prevent federal political appointees and bureaucrats from intervening in patient treatment decisions.

So: Not doctors, but federal appointees and bureaucrats will decide patient treatments.

Defeated: Rep. Dean Heller (R-NV) proposed an amendment to put members of Congress under the same government-run health insurance.

So: Congress will not be enrolled in the government-run plan they want for all of us.

Defeated: Rep. Lee Terry (R-NE) proposed an amendment to delay frivolous spending for items such as “municipal jungle gyms and bicycle trails” until the budget deficit is below \$1 trillion.

So: The national run-away budget deficit will continue its upward climb unabated.

Defeated: (R-CA) Rep. Wally Herger’s amendment would have prevented rationed health care.

So: The federal government will decide who gets medical treatment, what and how much treatment they get, when and where they get it and from whom.

Defeated: Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX) offered an amendment to repeal the government-run health plan if wait times exceed the average wait times in private plans.

So: Wait times for treatment may be days, weeks, months, years or never.

Defeated: Amendments by Rep. Sam Johnson (R-TX), Rep. Brett Guthrie (R-KY) and Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) would have deleted the requirement that employers must provide health benefits to all employees.

So: Millions of Americans will lose their jobs when employers have to lay off workers in order to provide health benefits to employees they can afford to keep.

Defeated: Rep. Wally Herger (R-CA) and Pete Hoekstra (R-MI) offered amendments to suspend the employer mandate if national unemployment rate reaches or is above 10 percent.

So: Whatever the jobless rate, employers must buy government care or pay increased taxes.

Defeated: Proposed amendments by Rep. Dave Reichert (R-WA) outlined a waiver for employers who proved they would suffer financial hardship when existing workers were laid off, remaining employees’ salaries were cut, and no new workers could be hired.

So: American workers will be “sacrificial lambs” and businesses will suffer.

Defeated: Rep. Geoff Davis (R-KY) offered an amendment to prohibit an 8 percent tax on any employer whose employee refuses to accept the employer’s health care coverage.

So: Employers will be taxed more if an employee refuses to comply with federal mandates.

Defeated: Rep. John Kline (R-MN) tried to protect the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) that makes it possible for millions of American workers to get quality health care benefits through their employers.

So: Employers could be subjected to tangled legal liabilities that differ state-to-state.

Defeated: Rep. Howard P. “Buck” McKeon (R-CA) wanted to allow trade, industry, professional, or other business associations to form and buy health coverage cheaper.

So: The creation of small business associations to unite health plans will not be allowed.

Defeated: Rep. John Linder (R-GA) and Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA) tried to prohibit the “Exchange” from doing business in states that don’t limit medical lawsuits.

So: Since tort reform is not mentioned in H.R. 3200, exorbitant awards will continue.

Defeated: A proposal by Rep. Dean Heller (R-NV) would have prohibited providing tax-payer-funded health benefits to illegal aliens.

So: H.R. 3200 does not require U.S. citizenship for benefits, will give medical care to illegals who don’t have a policy and who will not be penalized for not being covered.

Defeated: Reps. Sam Johnson (R-TX), Eric Cantor (R-VA) and Mark Souder (R-IN) offered amendments to remove the provision of taxpayer-funded abortion-on-demand.

So: Abortion will be funded, though a Zogby poll shows over 70 percent of Americans oppose using taxpayer money to pay for abortions.

Defeated: Under an amendment by Rep. Nathan Deal (R-GA) states would not be required to provide coverage for abortion, Botox injections and hair plugs.

So: If H.R. 3200 passes, states will lose federal funding if such services are not provided.

Defeated: Rep. Charles Boustany, M.D. (R-LA) offered an amendment to prevent the forcing of American health care providers into a national government-run health insurance system, whether it’s called a “public option” or a “co-op” or something else.

So: Private insurance companies will lose almost all, if not all, of their policy-holders.

Defeated: Rep. Boustany’s amendment would have required the government to maintain financial reserves and other funds in amounts consistent with that required of private plans.

So: Government, simply, will either raise taxes or insurance premiums, probably, raise taxes.

Defeated: An amendment by Rep. Kevin Brady (R-TX) suggested that all Congressmen should read the health care bill before voting on it.

So: Many legislators will not read it, but will vote for it, regardless of the harm it will do.

Defeated: Reps. Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA) offered amendments to protect incomes under \$200,000 or \$250,000 (for joint filers) from new taxes.

So: Higher taxes are on the way. Hold onto your pocketbooks!

Defeated: Rep. Tom McClintock (R-CA) proposed an amendment to prevent government-controlled health care from taking effect unless the legislation is and remains “deficit neutral”.

So: Hundred of billions of dollars will be added to the deficit, says the nonpartisan CBO.

Defeated: Reps. Judy Biggert (R-IL) and Tom Price (R-GA) offered an amendment to ensure that Americans that like their current employer-provided coverage can keep it.

So: Private health coverage will not be shielded from new federally mandated regulations.

Defeated: (R-FL) Rep. Ginny Brown-Waite’s amendment to prohibit automatic enrolling of Americans in the plan and (R-MN) Rep. John Kline’s to allow workers keep their current plan.

So: Americans will be enrolled, with or without their consent. Workers will lose their private coverage and will be enrolled in the government plan, as well.

Defeated: Rep. Brown-Waite, also, offered an amendment to remove language to reduce funds for the Medicare Advantage program.

So: Millions of U.S. seniors will be forced into a federal plan of less care and fewer options.

Defeated: Rep. Peter Roskam (R-IL) offered an amendment to require payment rates for government-run health care to be based on the average private plan payments in today’s market.

So: Congressman Mike Pence (R-IN) explained, “The way an alligator competes with a duck,” is how government-run health care would compete with private sector health plans.

Defeated: Rep. Tom Price (R-GA), a physician, offered an amendment to keep the federal government from choosing “favored” physicians.

So: Physicians who participate in the government-run health care plan will be rewarded, while physicians that don’t participate will suffer financially.

Defeated: Rep. Price, also, offered an amendment to allow states with their own health plans to apply for waivers to exempt them from regulations of the new government-controlled system.

So: Governors and legislators must change state laws to make them conform to federal laws.

Defeated: Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA) offered an amendment to ensure that Health Savings Accounts would not be shut down or gutted by federal mandates. An amendment by Rep. Tom Price (R-GA) provided greater portability that would allow employers to contribute to “defined contribution” health coverage that individuals could use to pay for their own medical care.

So: Innovative plans to cover the cost of health care will be prohibited.

Defeated: The amendment Rep. Dave Reichert (R-WA) offered would have repealed the section that prohibits individuals from purchasing new private health insurance coverage.

So: H.R. 3200 won’t let private insurance providers to renew old policies or write new ones.

Defeated: Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI) offered an amendment to slow the bankruptcy of Medicare.

So: Medicare funding would continue to skyrocket, with no plan to stop it.

Defeated: Rep. Dave Camp (R-MI) offered an amendment specifying that new taxes would not be imposed until fraud in Medicare is below one percent spent of the program.

So: Rather than fight misuse of Medicare, government will tolerate the fraud and raise taxes.

ACTION – Oppose government health care bills.

Ask the state congressional delegation to vote NO on any version of government-run health care. Contact the following:

(a) Senator Chambliss and Senator Isakson in Washington, D.C., toll-free 1 877 851-6437.

(b) Also call your Congressman. To be connected to his office, use the toll-free 1 877 762-8762 and give your nine-digit zip code that’s on the junk mail you receive. Call all four Blue Dog* Democrats and ask them to vote NO.

(c) If you don’t get through on the toll-free line, call his number below. Georgia congressmen by district numbers:

1. Jack Kingston, 202 225-5831; 2. Sanford Bishop*, 202 225-3631; 3. Lynn Westmoreland, 202 225-5901; 4. Hank Johnson, 202 225-1605; 5. John Lewis, 202 225-3801; 6. Tom Price, 202 225-4501; 7. John Linder, 202 225-4272; 8. Jim Marshall*, 202 225-6531; 9. Nathan Deal, 202 225-5211; 10. Paul Broun, 202 225-4101; 11. Phil Gingrey, 202 225-2931; 12. John Barrow*, 202 225-2823; 13. David Scott*, 202 225-2939.

* **Georgia Blue Dog Democrats** declaring opposition to H.R. 3200 are Congressmen Barrow, Bishop, Marshall & Scott.

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