



STATE OF TEXAS

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March 19, 2010

Members of Congress:

As Congress considers President Obama's latest federal health care proposal, we urge you to put Texans first and vote against the federal government's takeover of health care. Texans deserve affordable, high-quality health care, not higher taxes, increased health insurance premiums and unprecedented mandates.

We recognize the need for true health care reform that controls rising costs and ensures hardworking Texans can afford health care for themselves and their families. But government programs should not be the first place we look to expand coverage.

The Texas Health and Human Services Commission estimates the latest proposal will double the number of Medicaid recipients, increasing the burden on Texas taxpayers by an additional \$24.3 billion over the next 10 years, without reducing health care costs or improving quality of care. Instead, we can take steps to improve the health of Texans while reducing costs, by empowering them to live healthier lifestyles, by rewarding hospitals and doctors for eliminating unnecessary procedures and improving quality of care, by reducing the fear of unnecessary lawsuits, and by giving the private market the freedom to compete.

In addition to the enormous cost to Texans, we believe the backroom negotiations and special deals that some congressional leaders have cut may well be unconstitutional. Additionally, it appears congressional leaders might resort to employing an obscure parliamentary procedure to avoid an actual vote on the bill. This is not how the public expects legislation of this magnitude to be debated or enacted.

As leaders of our great state, we strive to enact policies that protect liberty and ensure that government reflects the will of the people. We urge you to stand with Texas taxpayers and protect the prosperity of Texas by voting against this government takeover of health care. Instead of creating mandates that will exacerbate an already broken and unsustainable system, Congress should give states more flexibility to create an accessible and affordable health care system. While Washington argues, Texans wait for real reform that results in everyone having the opportunity to live a healthier life without adding trillions of dollars of debt that we and our children will have to pay.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Rick Perry in black ink.

Rick Perry
Governor

Handwritten signature of David Dewhurst in black ink.

David Dewhurst
Lieutenant Governor

Handwritten signature of Joe Straus in black ink.

Joe Straus
Speaker of the House