

ARLEN SPECTER
PENNSYLVANIACOMMITTEES:
JUDICIARY
APPROPRIATIONS
ENVIRONMENT AND
PUBLIC WORKS
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3802
specter.senate.gov

May 8, 2009

Mr. Richard Kirsch
National Campaign Director
Health Care for America Now
1825 K Street NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Mr. Kirsch:

During my tenure in the United States Senate, I have introduced and co-sponsored legislation to cover the 47 million plus people in the United States who are uninsured with a comprehensive insurance plan.

I subscribe to the principles set forth by Health Care for America Now, but want to express two reservations on signing on to my support.

With respect to the clause in the third bullet - "to join a public health insurance plan" - I look forward to discussing and considering this issue. A starting point could be the proposal made by Senator Schumer earlier this week which seeks to maintain a level playing field between the private sector and any public plan. There may well be other proposals on this issue which should be considered in drafting legislation and debating the bill on the Senate floor.

The other issue which I think requires extensive debate and analysis is the clause in the eighth bullet - "using the public's purchasing power to lower drug and other prices." On April 10, 2007, former Congressional Budget Office Director Peter Orszag wrote to Finance Committee Chairman Baucus regarding cost savings from government purchasing of prescription drugs and indicated that government purchasing would have a negligible effect on saving money. In order to maintain a level playing field between the private sector and any public plan, consideration would have to be given to the implications of the Government's purchasing power in buying prescription drugs which could provide an unfair competitive advantage. There may be other proposals on this issue which should be considered in drafting legislation and debating the issue on the Senate floor.

I look forward to working with you and your Organization as we move forward in the legislative process on health care reform.

Sincerely,



Arlen Specter

Via Facsimile

HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA NOW!

It's time for an American solution that will guarantee our families' health and a healthy economy. The first order of business for the new President and Congress in 2009 should be health care legislation that guarantees quality, affordable health care for all.

We all agree that the longer we wait to fix our broken health care system, the harder it will be for us to get the health care we need. **BUT WHAT KIND OF SOLUTION DO WE WANT?** A solution in which all of us – individuals, employers, and government – share responsibility for guaranteeing access to health care we all can count on? Or a scenario in which we are on our own when it comes to getting health care? **WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?**

Which Side Are You On?

On your own to get health insurance

- Coverage and care for everyone in our nation are *not* guaranteed.
- Discourages employers from providing health benefits for workers, leaving more and more people on their own with the insurance companies.
- For the first time, people would pay income taxes on health insurance benefits paid for by their employers.
- Individuals and families would receive a tax credit that would pay for about one-quarter to one-half of the cost of health insurance that they purchase on their own.
- **No** requirements that health insurers have standard benefits. Health insurance companies could charge high deductibles – as much as \$10,000.
- **Nothing** to stop abusive insurance company practices, like refusing to cover pre-existing conditions, denying or delaying claims or restricting your choice of doctors.
- **No** choice of a public health insurance plan as an alternative to private health insurance.
- **No** controls on insurance company premiums or profits or on how much drug companies can charge for prescriptions.
- Health insurers will be able to sell policies across state lines, leaving people without the protection of their state laws.

I'm on this side.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Quality, affordable health care for all

- Guaranteed coverage and care for everyone in America.
- Affordable coverage and care, with premiums and out-of-pocket costs based on a family's ability to pay.
- Everyone gets a choice of health insurance plans, including the right to keep your current insurance, choose another private plan or (to join a public health insurance plan.)*
- Standard, comprehensive benefits, with a choice of providers, that meet our families' health care needs – from preventive care to care for serious illness.
- Equity in health care access, treatment, research and resources to people and communities of color and strengthening health services in low-income communities.
- Coverage that is predictable and affordable for working families, retirees, small businesses, and other employers.
- Government sets and enforces rules on insurance company practices and charges, requiring them to put our health care before their profits.
- Controls costs while improving quality, with measures such as: lowering administrative expenses, investing in preventive care, actively managing disease, setting standards for performance, reducing medical errors, and (using the public's purchasing power to lower drug and other prices) *

I'm on this side and I oppose the other side's "on your own" proposals.

Signature: *Arleen Specter*

Name: Arleen Specter

Date: 5/8/09

** subject to the determination expressed in the accompanying letter*

Please fax the signed copy to (928) 447-6189

Contact Health Care for America Now! at info@healthcareforamericanow.org or

www.healthcareforamericanow.org