

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 3, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Office of the Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

As the Senate continues to work on health reform legislation, we strongly urge you to consider including a public option.

Here are the reasons for this request:

**1) The public option is overwhelmingly popular.**

A December New York Times poll shows that, despite the attacks of recent months, the American public supports the public option 59% to 29%. And a recent Research 2000 poll found 82% of people who supported President Obama in 2008 and Scott Brown for Senate last week also support the public option. Only 32% of this key constituency is in favor of the current Senate bill – with more saying it “doesn’t go far enough” rather than it “goes too far.”

Support for health care legislation started to fall as popular provisions like the public option were stripped out and affordability standards were watered down. The American people want us to fight for them and against special interests like the insurance industry, and it is our responsibility to show them that their voices are being heard.

**2) The public option will save billions for taxpayers, speaking to the fiscally-responsible sensibilities of our constituents.**

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that the public option will save taxpayers anywhere from \$25 billion to \$110 billion and will save billions more when private insurers compete to bring down premium costs. The stronger the public option, the more money it saves.

By including the public option, we can simultaneously reduce tax increases and the deficit. This is a common-sense way to temper the frustration of Americans who question whether Congress is spending their money wisely and fighting for the middle class.

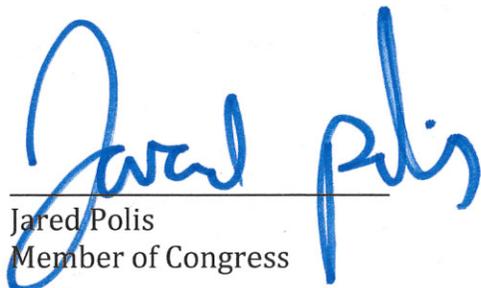
**3) There is strong support in the Senate for a popular public option.**

It is very likely that the public option could have passed the Senate, if brought up under majority-vote “budget reconciliation” rules. While there were valid reasons stated for not using reconciliation before, especially given that some important provisions of health care

reform wouldn't qualify under the reconciliation rules, those reasons no longer exist. The public option would clearly qualify as budget-related under reconciliation, and with the majority support it has garnered in the Senate, it should be included in any healthcare reform legislation that moves under reconciliation.

As Democrats forge "the path forward" on health care, we believe that passing the public option through reconciliation should be part of that path. We urge you to favorably consider our request to include a public option in the reconciliation process.

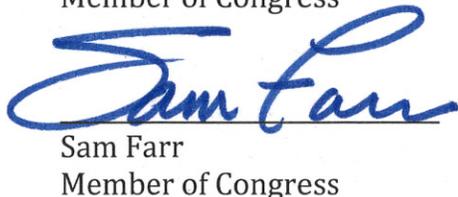
Sincerely,



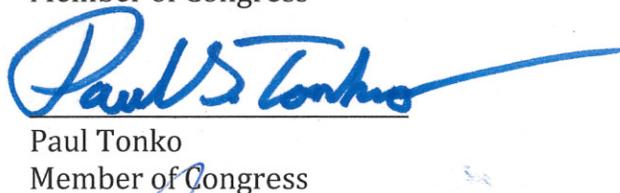
Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress



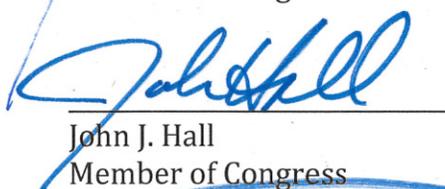
Sam Farr  
Member of Congress



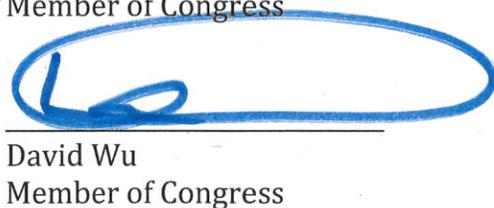
Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress



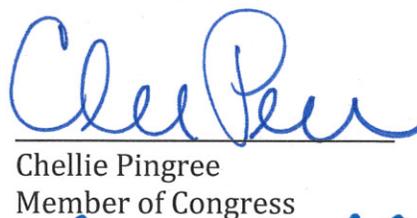
Donna M. Christensen  
Member of Congress



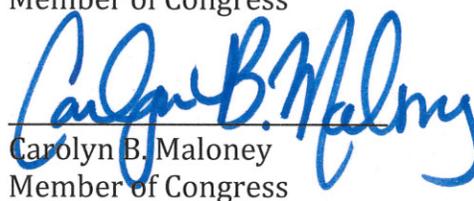
John J. Hall  
Member of Congress



David Wu  
Member of Congress



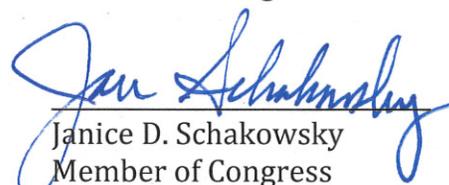
Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney  
Member of Congress



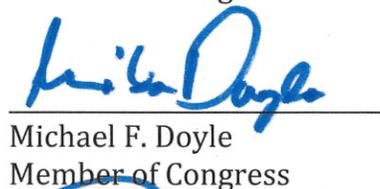
Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



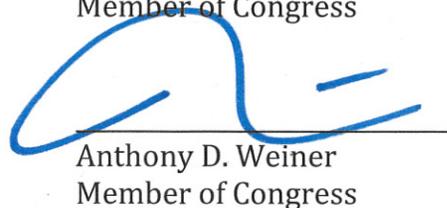
Janice D. Schakowsky  
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Yvette D. Clarke  
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Michael F. Doyle  
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Anthony D. Weiner  
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Alcee L. Hastings

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Gwen Moore  
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Chaka Fattah  
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Jerrold Nadler  
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Lynn C. Woolsey

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Alan Grayson

Alan Grayson  
Member of Congress

John Garamendi

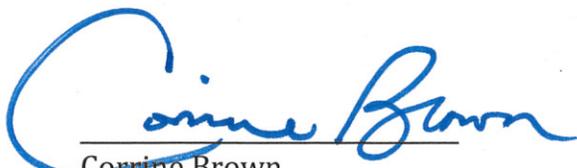
John Garamendi  
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John W. Olver

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James P. Moran

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Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



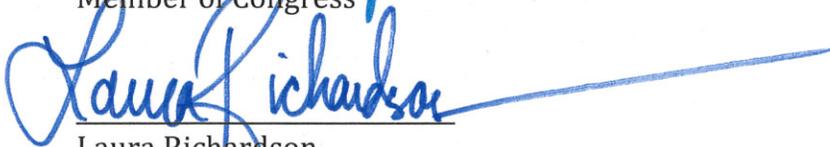
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



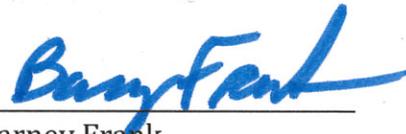
Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



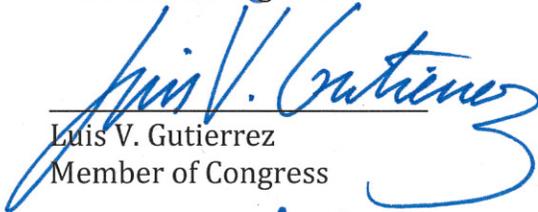
Christopher S. Murphy  
Member of Congress



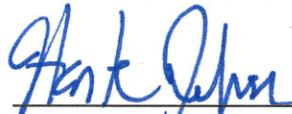
Laura Richardson  
Member of Congress



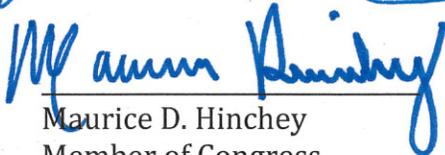
Barney Frank  
Member of Congress



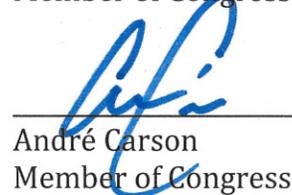
Luis V. Gutierrez  
Member of Congress



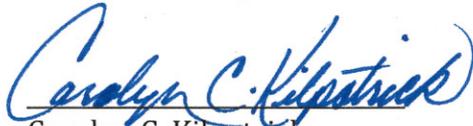
Hank Johnson, Jr.  
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Maurice D. Hinchey  
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André Carson  
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Carolyn C. Kilpatrick  
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Phil Hare  
Member of Congress



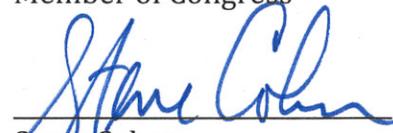
Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



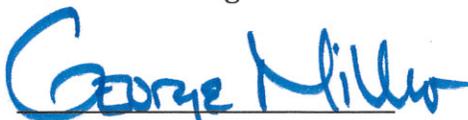
Michael M. Honda  
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Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



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Diane E. Watson  
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Donald M. Payne

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Maxine Waters

Maxine Waters  
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Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.

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Ben Ray Luján

Ben Ray Luján  
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Marcy Kaptur

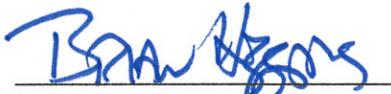
Marcy Kaptur  
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Lois Capps

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Wm. Lacy Clay

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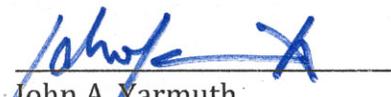
Brian Higgins  
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Niki Tsongas  
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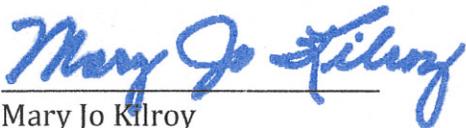
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John A. Yarmuth  
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Anna G. Eshoo  
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Mary Jo Kilroy  
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Joe Courtney  
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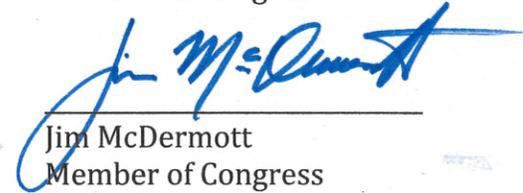
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Mazie K. Hirono  
Member of Congress



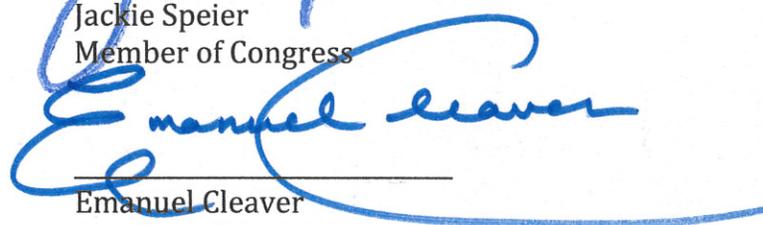
Steven R. Rothman  
Member of Congress



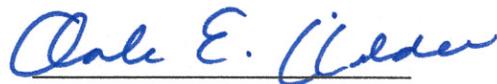
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Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver  
Member of Congress



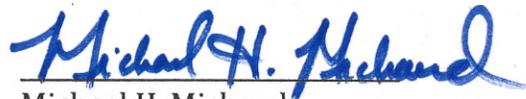
Dale E. Kildee  
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



Betty Sutton  
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Michael H. Michaud  
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Gene Green  
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Doris O. Matsui

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Brad Miller

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Thomas S. P. Perriello

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Linda T. Sánchez

Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress