

VIDEO: Let the States Provide Single Payer Health Care

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Congress members should block the health insurance reform bill until an amendment passed last July is reinstated to allow states to create single-payer healthcare if they choose.

Ask 14 congress members to withhold support for a healthcare bill unless language is restored allowing states to create healthcare solutions.

Several states' legislatures are [close to enacting](#) single-payer healthcare bills.

This is a complete healthcare solution that eliminates the for-profit insurance industry, lowers the cost of pharmaceuticals, reduces bureaucracy, and provides universal coverage. As President Obama explains: "Now, the truth is that, unless you have a — what's called a single-payer system, in which everybody is automatically covered, then you're probably not going to reach every single individual."

We're not creating such a system in Washington. We're creating something far more limited and compromised, expensive and wasteful. The healthcare bill now in play in Congress may constitute a tremendous step forward, or a tiny one, or a public bailout of the sickness industry that will do more harm than good. The bill includes [some good measures](#) but empowers profiteers who are crafting most of the details and whose stocks rise every time passage appears possible.

One good measure that is no longer included was the so-called public option, which — in its final form — was to be controlled by privately determined rates and reach [fewer than 5 percent](#) of Americans, according to the President, or [less than that](#), according to the Congressional Budget Office. With that fight now lost, should the more progressive members of Congress simply vote for a bill that may do more harm than good, and allow the pattern of ignoring progressive demands to be more firmly established?

What if there were something far less controversial than the public option that could bring healthcare to far more people? And what if this something had already passed in committee and been unceremoniously stripped out of the bill without a fight? Would it be worth a winnable fight right now to put this measure back in?

When the first state passes single-payer healthcare, none of the other 49 states will lose anything they've gained through Congress. But the lucky state whose legislature tries to do something more won't see any immediate benefit, because the insurance companies will sue. And there are federal laws that may allow such suits to prevail and deny states the right to provide their residents with healthcare.

Last July the House Committee on Education and Labor [voted 25 to 19](#), with bipartisan support, to pass an amendment proposed by Congressman Dennis Kucinich to waive federal restrictions and allow states to provide healthcare if they choose. Nothing in any other versions of the healthcare bill from other committees conflicted with this language, but it was quietly removed nonetheless. (House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the White House told her to remove it.) And the Senate bill [added language](#) forbidding state healthcare solutions through 2017, and not – despite [what the President told Kucinich](#) – including the waivers that had been in Kucinich’s amendment.

Republicans can be expected to vote No on any healthcare bill, no matter how limited or corrupt. But these 14 Democrats voted yes in committee on the Kucinich Amendment:

Dennis J. Kucinich (OH-10) phone (202)225-5871, fax (202)225-5745, [Email](#). [Facebook](#). [Twitter](#).

Donald M. Payne (NJ-10) phone (202)225-3436, fax (202)225-4160, [Email](#). [Email for constituents](#).

Robert C. Scott (VA-03) phone (202)225-8351, fax (202)225-8354, [Email](#). [Email for constituents](#).

Lynn C. Woolsey (CA-06) phone (202)225-5161, fax (202)225-5163, [Email for constituents](#). [Twitter](#).

Raúl M. Grijalva (AZ-07) phone (202)225-2435, fax (202)225-1541, [Email](#). [Email for constituents](#). [Twitter](#).

CPC Email for Woolsey and Grijalva: [Email form](#). Email: progressive@mail.house.gov.

John F. Tierney (MA-06) phone (202)225-8020, fax (202)225-5915, [Email](#). [Facebook](#).

David Wu (OR-01) phone (202)225-0855, fax (202)225-9497, [Email](#). Email: david@wuforcongress.com. [Email for constituents](#).

Rush D. Holt (NJ-12) phone (202)225-5801, fax (202)225-6025, [Email](#). Email: mail@RushHolt.com. [Email for constituents](#). [Facebook](#).

Dave Loebsack (IA-02) phone (202)225-6576, fax (202)226-0757, [Email](#). [Facebook](#).

Yvette Clarke (NY-11) phone (202)225-6231, fax (202)226-0112, Email: clarkeforcongress@gmail.com. [Email for constituents](#).

Carol Shea-Porter (NH-01) phone (202)225-5456, fax (202)225-5822, [Email](#).

Marcia Fudge (OH-11) phone (202)225-7032, fax (202)225-1339, [Facebook](#).

Jared Polis (CO-2) phone (202)225-2161, fax (202)226-7840, [Email for constituents](#). [Facebook](#). [Twitter](#). Legislative Director Rosalyn Kumar.

Paul Tonko (NY-21) phone (202)225-5076, fax (202)225-5077, [Email for constituents](#). [Facebook](#). [Twitter](#).

Their work was rudely ignored. If they could be moved to withhold their support for a healthcare bill until it reinstates the missing amendment, progressives would find a voice and a lever of power, and the campaign for healthcare reform would be energized in those areas where it has a chance of truly transformational change, namely in the states.

Contact these 14 congress members with the phone numbers and website forms above.

What we are asking for: Please oppose the health insurance reform bill unless the amendment you voted for and passed in committee last July 17th is reinstated, permitting states to enact healthcare reforms if they choose to.

Tweetable version: Please oppose hcr bill unless amendment you passed on July 17th is reinstated permitting states to enact hcr reforms.

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