

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-2802

September 8, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C., 20006

Dear Mr. President:

Yesterday, you said those critical of your healthcare plan were “trying to scare the American people and preserve the status quo.” You rhetorically asked critics “what’s your answer? What’s your solution?” and asserted that “the truth is, they don’t have one. It’s do nothing.” (Speech before the AFL-CIO, Cincinnati, Ohio, September 7, 2009)

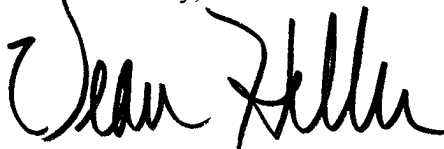
As you may recall, I have written to you previously on the subject of healthcare. While I have yet to receive a response from the White House regarding my proposal that Members of Congress participate in the government-run plan proposed in H.R. 3200, I wanted to bring to your attention to the fact that many individual Republican Members of Congress have introduced their own unique bills reflecting the concerns and needs of their constituents as part of the healthcare debate.

For my part, I introduced the Steps Toward Access and Reform (STAR) Act (H.R. 3483) in late July. While this legislation will not be a “silver bullet” solution to all the problems facing our healthcare system, my bill addresses medical liability reform, improves access to breast and lung cancer screenings, and takes other important steps toward reform that I think most Americans would support. My legislation also addresses prescription drug reimportation – an idea I support along with many of my Democrat colleagues.

I introduced some provisions of the STAR Act as amendments during the House Ways & Means Committee’s consideration of H.R. 3200. Unfortunately, each of my amendments were defeated – largely along party-line votes – by the very individuals who continue to incorrectly label Republicans as the “party of no.”

Mr. President, I respectfully urge you to take a look at the STAR Act and other Republican alternatives to H.R. 3200. Your leadership would encourage congressional Democrats to actually consider Republican ideas instead of voting no on amendments just because they were introduced by a Member on the other side of the aisle. I hope you will familiarize yourself with these proposals so our shared goal of a meaningful bipartisan dialogue on healthcare can be realized.

Sincerely,



DEAN HELLER
Member of Congress