

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND
TRANSPORTATION
BANKING, HOUSING, AND
URBAN AFFAIRS
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

July 16, 2013

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

Dear Mr. President,

Since the inception of ObamaCare, I have been very vocal in my concern about the cost and quality of care associated with health care exchanges. While Members of Congress and their staff are included under Section 1312(D)(i) and 1312(D)(II), Members of Senate and House Leadership and their staff, as well as the Executive Branch, are exempted from going into the exchange. The fact that lawmakers exempted themselves serves as further evidence that I do not stand alone in my concern about these health care exchanges.

However, it is only fair that lawmakers and all Congressional staff are beholden to the same laws as every other American. As you may recall, I wrote to you regarding this issue in 2009 to encourage you to require that any health care bill you sign include a provision that all elected officials enroll in the government-run health insurance plan, including the President. As a Member of the House Ways and Means Committee during the health care debate, I introduced an amendment to the bill that would require all Members of Congress and their dependents who choose to receive health care coverage do so through the exchange.

Now, on the eve of the deadline to enter these exchanges, some elected officials and their staff still are not included in the health care law. Senator Vitter and I introduced legislation in May ensuring that those who wrote the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and mistakenly left themselves out could now be included in the exchanges. Unfortunately, a hearing or floor action has not been scheduled. Perhaps now is the time for the Administration to consider making use of the Executive Order to ensure that all Senate and House Leadership and their staff, as well as the Executive Branch, are covered under the health insurance exchange created by the ACA. This would help ensure fairness is maintained across the board. I appreciate your leadership on this issue to make sure the \$1.5 billion being delegated to the Department of Health and Human Services under your budget leaves no one out, including yourself.

These individuals need to be held accountable for the law which they created. Since you have been selective in what is enforced in the ACA, I ask that you use this same power to include all elected officials, including yourself, in the health care exchange through the use of Executive Order.

Sincerely,



DEAN HELLER
U.S. Senator