

# Congressional Progressive Caucus

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## 82 Strong and Growing: Open to New and Different Ideas

August 4, 2009

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The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker, US House of Representatives  
H-232, US Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker:

We write to you in response to an article in the *Washington Post* "Democrats Find Rallying Points on Health Reform, but Splinters Remain." We are concerned with the statements made regarding the progressives.

The comments are most concerning after, sixty Members, including members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, among others, voiced clear opposition to the deal struck with a few members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce that weakened the public plan and reduced subsidies.

We want to assure you that our continued support is contingent on a robust public plan, similar to what was reported out of the Committees on Ways and Means and Education and Labor. Those two committees outline a plan that brings down costs and improves quality, access, and competition. Furthermore, the subsidies included in these bills must be restored, because without these subsidies, health insurance access for many low and middle income families will be effectively cut off. The final bill brought to the House Floor must include these provisions or we will oppose the bill.

In the Washington Post article, you also defended the Committee on Energy and Commerce deal by saying it was similar to Chairman Edward Kennedy's health reform bill. A public plan with negotiated rates may have been the strongest compromise on a public plan the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with the leadership of Chairman Kennedy and Senator Christopher Dodd, could pass; however, the House can and must do better.

Madam Speaker, the Congressional Progressive Caucus stands united to provide high quality, affordable and accessible health care choices for all Americans. A majority of our members prefer single payer. Nonetheless, we stand solidly behind our criteria for a robust public option. We cannot support anything less.

We look forward to working with you as the three Committees work to combine their bills.

Sincerely,

