

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

September 30, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
The Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
The Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer:

We write to reiterate our strong commitment to health insurance reform legislation that includes a robust public health insurance option that will provide greater choice and lower costs for American consumers by injecting much needed competition into the health insurance marketplace.

A critical goal of health care reform should be to lower costs for individuals, small businesses and the federal government. In 1980, the U.S. spent more than \$250 billion, or 9 percent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP), on health care. In the decades since, that figure has grown to more than \$2.2 trillion (16.2% of GDP). By 2018, it is expected to nearly double again to \$4.3 trillion (20.3% of GDP). Also during this time, the American people have seen premiums more than double since 2000 while wages have stagnated. Our families and small businesses have paid the hidden costs - to the tune of approximately \$1,100 per family - that are the result of subsidizing treatment of the uninsured. These facts underlie the need for the public option and health insurance coverage for all Americans as the best way to reform our inefficient and bloated health system, and reduce the burden placed on America's families, small businesses and the federal budget.

The public option is not a pathway to government-run health care for everyone, it is simply another choice for people who need health insurance. We fail to see any reason why we should not seek to increase Americans' health insurance options.

When weighed against other ideas, the public option remains the most effective tool to bring about competition, choice, efficiency, transparency, and cost reduction in the marketplace. Thank you for considering our views and recognizing the need for a strong public option in any health reform legislation that comes to the House floor.

Sincerely,

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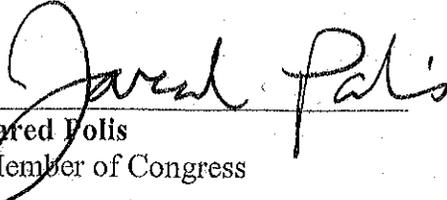
**Diana DeGette**  
Member of Congress

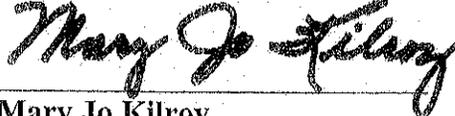
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**Lois Capps**  
Member of Congress

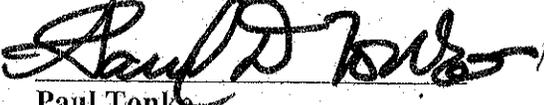
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**Chris Murphy**  
Member of Congress

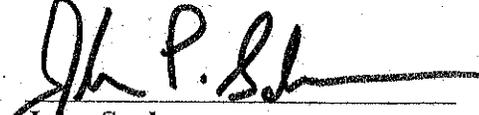
  
Jared Polis  
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Mary Jo Kilroy  
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Mark Schauer  
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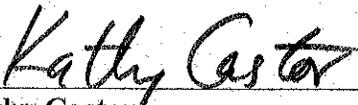
  
Paul Tonko  
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Kurt Schrader  
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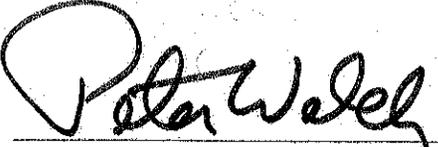
  
John Sarbanes  
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Betty Sutton  
Member of Congress

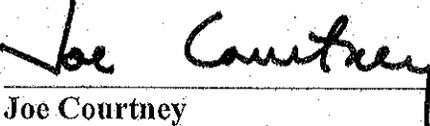
  
Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress

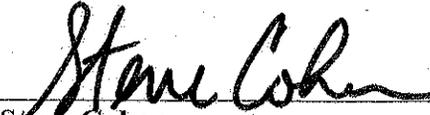
  
Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

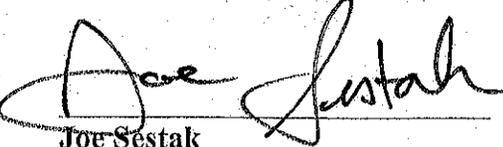
  
John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

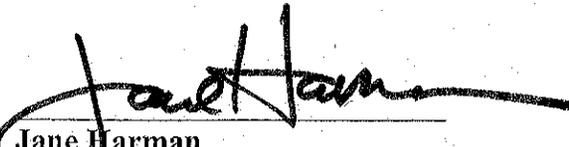
  
Peter Welch  
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Carol Shea-Porter  
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Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress

  
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

  
Joe Sestak  
Member of Congress

  
Jane Harman  
Member of Congress



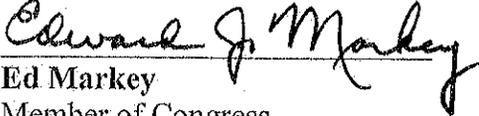
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Gene Green  
Member of Congress



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Adam Schiff  
Member of Congress



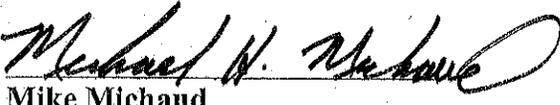
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Ed Markey  
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Steve Israel  
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Mike Michaud  
Member of Congress



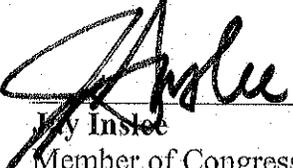
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Rush Holt  
Member of Congress



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David Wu  
Member of Congress



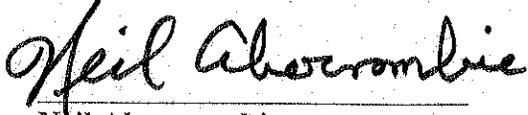
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Jay Inslee  
Member of Congress



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Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



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Neil Abercrombie  
Member of Congress



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Steve Rothman  
Member of Congress



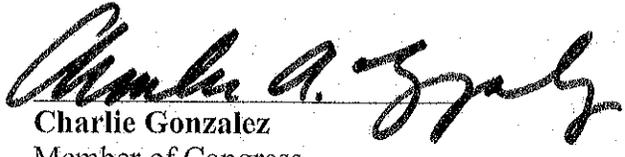
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Mike Doyle  
Member of Congress



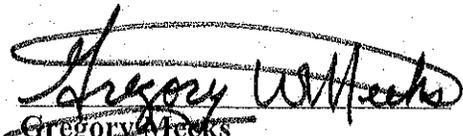
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Jim Langevin  
Member of Congress



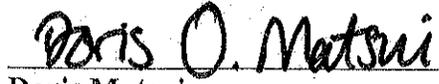
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Charlie Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



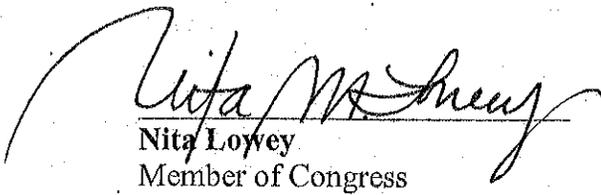
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Gregory Meeks  
Member of Congress

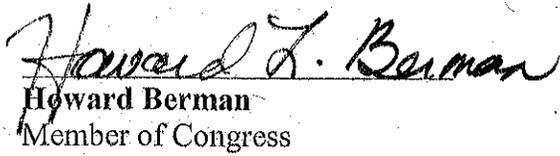


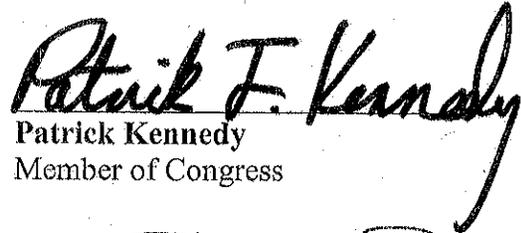
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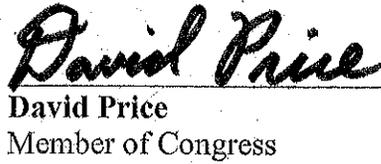
Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress

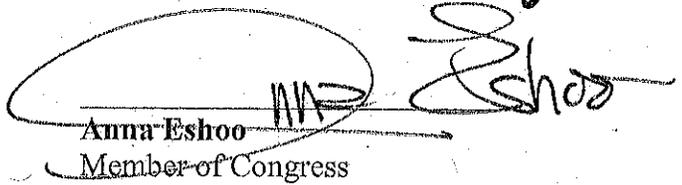
  
Nita Lowey  
Member of Congress

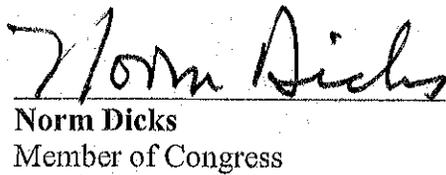
  
Gary Ackerman  
Member of Congress

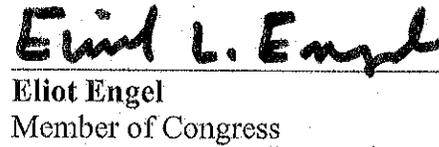
  
Howard Berman  
Member of Congress

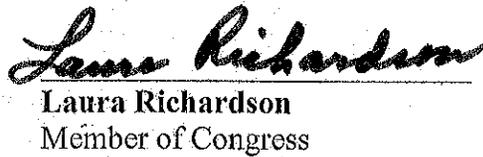
  
Patrick Kennedy  
Member of Congress

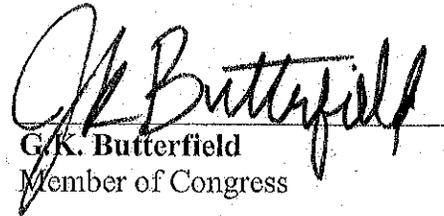
  
David Price  
Member of Congress

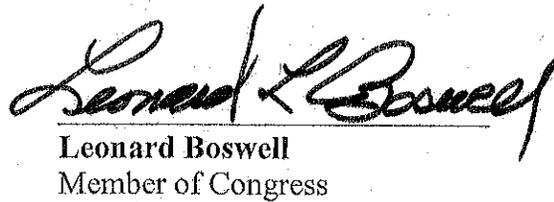
  
Anna Eshoo  
Member of Congress

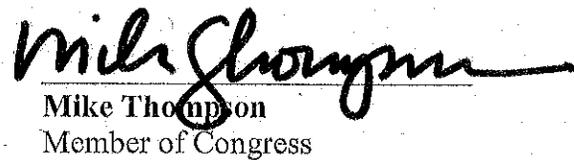
  
Norm Dicks  
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Laura Richardson  
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