

For many Americans, it's impossible to ignore the feelings of frustration and anger over the House majority's misuse of health care reform in order to achieve a partisan victory.

If the president and the Democrat majority in Congress think the public's disgust is fleeting, they are wrong. If they believe Washington's dismissal of the views of ordinary Americans will be forgotten, they are also wrong.

Health care is a deeply personal issue. Most people don't want to be forced into some untested insurance exchange because a politician feels he or she knows what's best for them, or wants to claim a "historic achievement."

You cannot achieve great things by disregarding the will of the American people. You cannot expect your efforts to bear fruit if they lack a clear popular mandate.

Many have likened the 219 to 212 House vote to pass the president's health care bill to the enactment of Social Security and Medicare, many decades ago. In fact, both of those landmark laws enjoyed broad bipartisan support when they passed the U.S. House.

No less than 81 House Republicans voted for the Social Security Act of 1935, and 70 Republicans joined with Democrats to pass Medicare in 1965.

Yet, on the "historic" day of March 21, 2010, the president's and the speaker's health care bill garnered not a single Republican vote. Furthermore, 34 Democrats joined with us in standing against the unpopular legislation.

In the end, the health care bill vote carried because of the enormous majority that the Democrat party holds in the House, combined with political threats made against individual Democrat members by their own leadership. That's hardly a popular mandate.

And let us not forget the speaker was even considering passing her health care bill without a recorded vote. Fortunately, the outcry of the American people convinced her to abandon her plans to cloak the official vote count.

During the weekend of the House vote, it was a moving experience to meet Americans from all over the country who traveled to Capitol Hill seeking the ear of anyone who would listen, to express their heartfelt opposition to a government takeover of health care.

One such example was a man who left his wife and children at home, drove all night – some 998 miles – all the way from Fairhope, Alabama, to Washington, D.C., just to go door-to-door to those members of Congress who were still on the fence to encourage them to do the right thing.

When I thanked him for making the trip, he said, "Congressman Bonner, I just couldn't sit back and look my children in the face and tell them – years from now – I didn't do everything I could to keep this from happening."

I voted against the \$1.2 trillion Democrat health care bill for many reasons. In addition to the fact that it was written without regard to the public's views, I opposed its job killing tax increases on small businesses. I opposed its \$200 billion in cuts to Medicare Advantage, affecting over 170,000 Alabama seniors. I opposed its potentially unconstitutional mandate that all Americans buy insurance. And, I opposed it due to its failure to effectively guard against the federal funding of abortions.

There's much more in the 2,700-page legislation that has yet to come to light. For example, senior staff working for Speaker Pelosi and the other authors of the health care bill, exempted themselves, the president, the vice president, White House and other executive branch staff from the health care bill's mandates.

While members of Congress, their personal staff and the American people are now subject to the restrictions of the new health care law, the liberal elite who crafted this bill evidently feel it's beneath them.

On the same day the president signed his health care bill into law, 14 states, including Alabama, joined in lawsuits challenging the new federal law.

I am committed to supporting efforts to roll back this badly flawed legislation and replace it with true health care reform that Americans need and will support.

Church Service in the U.S. Capitol:

About 12 hours before the Sunday, March 21st health care bill vote, I was able to take part in a historical church service in the old House chamber in the U.S. Capitol. The service was attended by both Republicans and Democrats.

Beginning in the early 1800's, the U.S. Capitol building served as the location of a regular non-denominational worship service. The original House chamber was the sanctuary and the speaker's dais was the pulpit. In those days, the U.S. Capitol building was said to host the largest church service in Washington.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.