

Last Thursday, I joined dozens of my fellow Republican colleagues on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol, to publicly stand up against Speaker Nancy Pelosi's big government takeover of health care. I am completely – 100 percent – opposed to this unnecessary intrusion into the lives of all Americans which will ultimately restrict personal care choices, raise taxes and vastly expand our government's reach.

As this column goes to press, the speaker is calling for a rare Saturday/Sunday vote on her health care bill. Naturally, I will vote against it. However, as I promised thousands of people who came to my town hall meetings in August, it is not enough to "just say no."

As such, I am proud to support the Republican health care reform bill which focuses on lowering premiums for families and small businesses while increasing access to affordable care without growing government.

From the beginning, the Obama administration and Speaker Pelosi have chosen to ignore the pleas of the vast majority of the American people. Rather than working with Republicans and some conservative Democrats, they've shut us out of conversations – held behind closed doors – and, in so doing, basically told the American people "we know better than you do."

Make no mistake.... this is a radical, extreme agenda for our country and as the Wall Street Journal opined last week, "the worst bill ever."

But, sadly, we have seen this kind of arrogance several times before. We saw it with the so-called economic stimulus which promised to create or save 3 million jobs (unemployment for the country jumped to 10.2 percent last Friday).

We saw it again with Cap and Trade.

Unfortunately, their handling of health care reform has been a particularly troubling example. From the start, the president and the speaker have taken the position of dictating to the American people what is best for you and your families.

As you know, the speaker's 1,990-page health care bill was unveiled a week ago. Ironically, it's twice the size of the controversial health care bill that generated great public opposition in August.

In fact, the Pelosi bill has more pages than the Bible, and, not surprisingly, it reads like a bureaucrat's dream:

- \$730 billion in new taxes on individuals and small businesses, including penalties for those who cannot afford coverage that meets the government's standards.

- \$1.2 trillion in new federal spending over ten years with hundreds of billions inevitably added to the federal budget deficit.

- The creation of 111 new federal offices and programs to oversee and run the new health care bureaucracy.

- Over \$500 billion in Medicare cuts over ten years resulting in the loss of Medicare Advantage benefits for some seniors.

- Nearly 5.5 million Americans could lose their jobs as a result of the tax mandates in the Speaker's health care bill.

Real Health Care Reform Bill

As I promised earlier this year, it's not enough to just oppose something; leaders must also tell the American people what they support. As such, the 177 House Republicans offered an alternative to the Pelosi bill that would deliver necessary reforms through a step-by-step process.

Our health care plan is the result of listening to the American people's choices for reform. It incorporates the most common ideas voiced by people who wish to preserve the best of our present health care system, while putting into place measures to increase access to care and lower costs.

Friends, these aren't radical ideas, but long overdue reforms.

Among other things our alternative would:

- Lower health care premiums for families and small businesses.

- Create universal access programs to guarantee all Americans access to health care regardless of pre-existing conditions.

- Stop abuse of medical malpractice lawsuits.

- Prevent insurers from unjustly cancelling a policy or imposing annual or lifetime spending caps.

- Permit Americans to buy health insurance across state lines.

- Allow small businesses to pool together to obtain health care at lower prices.

- Prohibit federal funds from being used to pay for abortions.

In fact, the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office says the Republican health care plan would reduce health care premiums by up to ten percent and lower the federal budget deficit by \$68 billion over the next ten years.

Make no mistake, the debate on health care is a long way from being over. Your voice – and that of the American people – is more important than ever.

Thanks to everyone who has contacted me over the past several months.

You can find links to both health care bills on my website.

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.