

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

March 5, 2013

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We write to you in the spirit of finding common ground to help Americans suffering from pre-existing conditions seeking affordable health care.

On February 15, 2013, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) announced to states that the agency was suspending enrollment in the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP). This \$5 billion program created by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) was intended to help individuals with pre-existing conditions obtain health coverage through January 1, 2014. Despite lower than expected enrollment, CMS announced it will no longer enroll individuals in the program and will bar states from processing new applications because of financial constraints. This is another reminder that the costs of PPACA are significantly understated.

Your Administration's action will leave thousands of Americans with pre-existing conditions without access to health care. According to a February 15, 2013, article appearing in *The Washington Post*, "[t]ens of thousands of Americans who cannot get health insurance because of preexisting medical problems will be blocked from a program designed to help them..." This article highlighted the plight of Joyce, a 61-year-old Virginia woman who is battling stage-four breast cancer, whose application was due to be finalized two days after the CMS announcement. It is unclear if she will be able to receive care.

Republicans have historically supported high-risk pools and reinsurance programs. In fact, the House Republican alternative to PPACA provided \$25 billion to aid Americans suffering from pre-existing conditions through new universal access programs that reformed and expanded state based high-risk pools and reinsurance programs. We argued during the PPACA debate that PCIP was underfunded and was not sustainable as structured. We also said that health reform should tackle the biggest problems first – lowering health care costs, increasing access to patient care, and prioritizing funding for chronically ill Americans. And while we still believe that our alternative would have provided better care and access for our most vulnerable Americans, it is time to temporarily set aside those differences and provide the resources necessary to assist those who need it most.

Therefore, to allow PCIP to continue to accept new enrollees, we urge you to support efforts to transfer the funds necessary from other PPACA programs, such as the Prevention and Public Health Fund, the Secretary's transfer authority to assist with state based exchanges, comparative effectiveness planning, or another similar program to PCIP. As you are aware, on prior occasions you have signed into law legislation that reduced the Prevention and Public Health Fund. We believe allowing those with pre-existing conditions access to health insurance is another worthy reason to reprogram these funds. In fact there are numerous programs within PPACA that receive greater levels of funding than PCIP. With your support, we could help these Americans get the care they need.

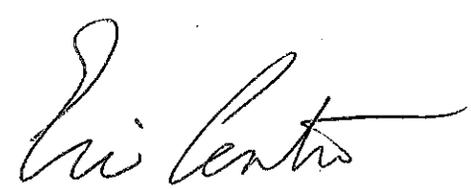
Our goal has been and remains full repeal of the health care law, which is driving up health care costs and making it harder for small businesses to create jobs. You obviously oppose repeal. But our disagreement on the broader issue of the law should not preclude us from working together to take this specific action on behalf of Americans in need of help. Please let us know if you would support this idea. We stand ready and willing to work with you.

Sincerely,



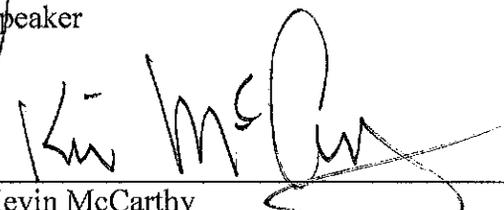
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John Boehner  
Speaker



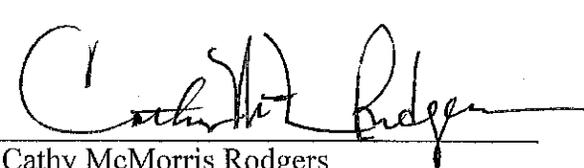
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Eric Cantor  
Majority Leader



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Kevin McCarthy  
Majority Whip



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Cathy McMorris Rodgers  
Republican Conference Chairman



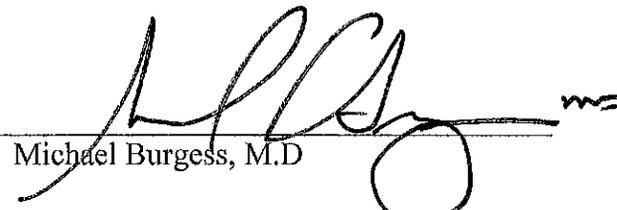
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Fred Upton  
Chairman, Committee on Energy &  
Commerce



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Joe Pitts  
Chairman, Committee on Energy &  
Commerce Health Subcommittee



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Michael Burgess, M.D