



Dear Editor:

Our nation is considering spending nearly \$1 trillion on a health care overhaul, yet there's no conclusive evidence that such a costly package will make coverage any more affordable for Louisianians. In fact, studies have shown that current Congressional proposals would result in the people of our state paying significantly more for their health coverage and care.

What the current health reform proposals would accomplish is a new system with more taxes that will be detrimental to Louisianians and cuts to Medicare that will mean higher costs borne by our state's seniors. In very real terms, this means that if the current proposals are signed into law, premiums will rise at an even faster rate than they currently do. This simply isn't a sustainable, long-term solution that Louisiana can afford.

Louisiana's health plans support health reform and have pledged changes to their business model to make health care affordable and accessible for everyone. We have proposed new pro-consumer rules and sweeping protections that will remove restrictions on preexisting conditions, end the practice of basing premiums on health status or gender, and help achieve universal coverage.

In order to make these proposals workable, all Americans must be enrolled in coverage and the government should provide assistance to those who cannot afford coverage on their own. Accomplishment of these reforms would go a long way toward making more affordable, higher quality care available to all.

Our country needs health care reform that makes health insurance more affordable and expands access to the uninsured. Unfortunately Congress' version of health reform fails to get the job done. Let's take a step back and consider health care reform that works. With the legislation being considered by the U.S. Senate, our state is depending on Senators Mary Landrieu and David Vitter to do just that.

Gil Dupré,
Chief Executive Officer
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