

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4705

July 9, 2009

Thank you for taking the time to personally voice your concerns about health care reform. Your willingness to dedicate time to this critical issue is commendable and I wish I could be there to talk with you personally. I am currently fighting on Capitol Hill for a health care reform package that guarantees high quality, affordable health care to every American.

Let me be clear: a public option needs to be part of health care reform. I am pushing for a public option that will keep insurance companies honest by competing to drive down costs and improve quality nation-wide. This plan needs to be accountable to the people and must work to provide the best coverage for the best price.

A public option will compete with insurance plans in a health insurance exchange. The health insurance exchange will be a new, tightly regulated marketplace where everyone can go to find affordable health care coverage. New consumer protections will prevent any plan, public or private, from excluding anyone based on a preexisting condition and strictly control premium increases for individual health risks. Additionally, federal financial assistance will be provided for low- and middle-income Americans, making health insurance affordable for all Americans.

As we drive forward with historic health care reform, I am listening to your voice and the voices of other dedicated Washington State residents. Our goals are the same. We need to fix the broken system we have today and provide all Americans with quality, affordable health care. It is critical that you help shape the solutions and set the tone in Washington, DC. I assure you that my staff is sharing your comments with me, and that I am committed to providing everyone in Washington State and across the nation with high quality health care.

Thank you again,



Maria Cantwell

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