



January 6, 2010

By Fax

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer  
House Majority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer:

The purpose of this letter is to express our concern on behalf of veterans, military members and their families with the Senate version and the House version of national health care reform. We are writing to you to urge you to protect TRICARE and VA Health Care programs because of your interest in veterans' affairs and broad experience in national defense.

We are alarmed there is no language in either of the bills that would expressly protect VA health care or TRICARE and fulfill President Obama's promise last August 2009 that neither program would "be affected by our efforts at broader healthcare reform." Section 311, of the House bill HR 3962, does not protect VA Health Care or TRICARE Programs.

In addition, unless there is specific language excluding TRICARE, TRICARE for Life, and VA health care programs from a proposed excise tax, veterans and military retirees face the very real prospect of paying a new tax on so-called "Cadillac" health care plans.

VA and TRICARE healthcare programs are earned benefits – earned through sacrifice and service and enacted by Congress that understands that tacking care of veterans and military retirees is a cost of defending our nation. Changing these benefits unintended or intended not only breaks a promise made to those who served in the Uniformed Services, it would threaten the viability of the all-volunteer force because it breaks faith with those who serve our country.

Many other sectors of our nation have specific and significant concerns as well. Small business worries about the impact of the expensive mandates on their survival and the economy as a whole. Seniors have great anxiety with the \$500 billion Medicare cut, which also directly affects many veterans who have Medicare themselves or whose spouses are covered through it. There are other worries that the impact of extensive penalties, taxes and fees in the bill will ultimately be borne by the nation's citizens who use the health system. We are also concerned that these provisions will impose additional unintended costs on veterans, active and reserve military, and our communities.

During the conference process, we strongly urge you to immediately seek an amendment to the bill and add language to make it clear that nothing in the act interferes with the Department of Veterans' Affairs or Department of Defense's existing authorities and that VA health care programs and the TRICARE and TRICARE of Life programs are excluded from any taxes, or unintended consequences.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Williams Coane". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

C. Williams Coane  
RADM, USN (Ret)  
Executive Director



January 6, 2010

By Fax

The Honorable Susan Davis  
Chairman, Military Personnel HASC  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Joe Wilson  
Ranking Mbr, Military Personnel, HASC  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Davis and Ranking Member Wilson:

The purpose of this letter is to express our concern on behalf of veterans, military members and their families with the Senate version and the House version of national health care reform. We are writing to you to urge you to protect TRICARE and VA Health Care programs because of your interest in veterans' affairs and broad experience in national defense.

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C. Williams Coane  
RADM, USN (Ret)  
Executive Director



January 6, 2010

By Fax

The Honorable Ike Skelton  
Chairman, House Armed Services Comm.  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Howard P. McKeon  
Ranking Member, House Armed Services  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Skelton and Ranking Member McKeon:

The purpose of this letter is to express our concern on behalf of veterans, military members and their families with the Senate version and the House version of national health care reform. We are writing to you to urge to protect TRICARE and VA Health Care programs because of your interest in veterans' affairs and broad experience in national defense.

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C. Williams Coane  
RADM, USN (Ret)  
Executive Director