

January 19, 2010

Dear Senator:

The undersigned whistleblower, public interest, taxpayer, patient and consumer groups urge you to approve protections for whistleblowers involved in all aspects of health care. The Senate health care reform bill as currently written would not protect employees who alert the government to waste, fraud, abuse and threats to public health and safety as they pertain to a wide range of health care activities, including preventive services, prescriptions, innovative treatments, and access to health care. That is because protections to whistleblowers apply only to title I in the bill for basic hospital care, or only around 25% of the legislation's overall provisions.

Though the signatories have varied opinions on the merits of the legislation, if this bill truly will attempt to contain health care costs, whistleblowers are crucial to its implementation. Through the help of whistleblowers, the federal government last year was able to identify health care fraud totaling \$5 billion, and this represents only a fraction of the dollars that could be recovered from wrongdoers if protections extend to the full scope of the legislation.

Drug companies, hospitals, laboratories, medical transportation providers, medical device suppliers, nursing homes and hospices all have been cited for placing marketing over medical care, and of wasting taxpayer dollars. The government simply lacks the resources to investigate and enforce compliance with the full scope of this law without help from whistleblowers.

Whistleblowers also have exposed similarly broad patient care breakdowns, ranging from improper administration of unsafe drugs to the use of untrained hospital staff to administer anesthesia.

An accountability loophole would be inexcusable. Protection for corporate employees defending *part* of a statute would be unprecedented. *Every* corporate whistleblower provision ever passed has covered the entire law that it was part of. The loophole also would cut back on accountability boundaries in the stimulus law, which has whistleblower protection for *all* medical care stimulus spending recipients.

For the aforementioned reasons, we urge you to approve whistleblower protections covering all titles in the health care reform bill.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Patient Safety.org

Bill of Attainder Project

Californians Aware

Center for Medical Consumers

Concerned Citizens of Petersburg

Consumer Action

Consumers Union

Disaster Accountability Project

Disclosure Watch

Ethics in Government Group

Essential Information

Fund for Constitutional Government

Georgians for Open Government

Government Accountability Project

Focus-On-Indiana

Health Integrity Project

Information Trust

International Association of Whistleblowers

iSolon.org

Liberty Coalition

Medical Whistleblower

Minnesota Coalition on Government Information

Model Family Organization

National Coalition Against Censorship

National Consumers League

National Employment Lawyers Association

National Forum on Judicial Accountability

National Judicial Conduct and Disability Law Project, Inc.

National Research Center for Women & Families

National Taxpayers Union

National Whistleblowers Center

National Women's Health Network

New Grady Coalition

OpenTheGovernment.org

POPULAR, Inc.

Project On Government Oversight

Public Citizen

Public Interest Institute (Iowa)

Semmelweis Society International

Sustainable Energy and Economy Network

The E-Accountability Foundation

The Rutherford Institute

U.S. Bill of Rights Foundation

Voices for Corporate Responsibility

Whistleblower's Support Fund

Whistleblowers U.S.A