

Congressman Rothman Reaffirms Strong Support for Public Option in Health Care Reform

(Washington, DC) — On Wednesday, Congressman Steve Rothman (D — NJ) spoke at a Capitol press conference in support of a strong Public Health Insurance Option in the House health care reform bill. He was among 50 House Democrats to sign onto a letter, sent on September 30, 2009 to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, pronouncing their support for a Public Option.

The letter was sponsored by Congresswoman Diana DeGette (D-CO), Congresswoman Lois Capps (D-CA), Congresswoman Jane Harman (D-CA) and Congressman Chris Murphy (D-CT). The Representatives who signed it represent the strong, widespread support among Members of the House and the American public for a Public Option.

“The Public Health Insurance Option is the only plan out there that will truly address the escalating costs of health care by creating competition and choice in the insurance market. It will slow the out of control and unreasonable premium increases that drive more and more American families to being uninsured and into bankruptcy,” said Rothman.

“The Public Option is designed to be self-sustaining, and to operate on a level playing field with private, for-profit health insurance companies. The intent is to provide competition, which will keep them honest, not to drive them out of business. Without the Public Option, any so called “health reform” bill would simply be a massive tax payer subsidy to private insurance companies — one which they certainly do not need.”

“I want to stress that absolutely no one will be forced to choose the Public Option. It will simply be one choice, along with numerous private health insurance options, which will be offered to consumers in the new Health Insurance Exchange. It is by no means a mandate.”

The latest public opinion poll, released on Tuesday by the Kaiser Family Foundation, found that nearly 6 in 10 Americans favor the inclusion of a public health insurance option in health care reform.

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