



August 25, 2009

The Honorable Tom Price  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Price:

**On behalf of Americans for Tax Reform, I would like to commend you and the Republican Study Committee for introducing H.R. 3400, the “Empowering Patients First Act”. This bill would truly reform the health care market and free Americans to make their own choices. All Congressmen interested in solving this nation’s health care crisis should support this legislation.**

Pervasive government interference has driven up health care costs and reduced competition. The draconian patchwork of state regulations artificially segments the country into 50 different markets. Unequal tax incentives hobble individual insurance and lock Americans into an employer-based insurance system. This system limits Americans’ ability to make choices and ensures that those who are laid off simultaneously lose their insurance – at the moment they are most vulnerable.

The Empowering Patients First Act restores vitality to the health insurance market. It allows Americans to purchase insurance across state lines, expanding choices and forcing competition between the different state regulatory regimes. A refundable tax credit – \$2000 for single filers or \$4000 for household – will revitalize the individual insurance market. Americans will be able to opt out of employer-provided insurance without suffering a tax penalty.

The bill also provides medical liability reform that caps non-economic damages at \$250,000, reining in the trial lawyers that have needlessly inflated costs in many states. Restrictions on comparative effectiveness research prohibit it from being used to ration care. Finally, the bill block-grants funds to the states for the creation of high risk pools, ensuring choices for Americans with pre-existing conditions.

**Too many of the bills before Congress double down on an overzealous regulatory regime. These bills vainly attempt to legislate the health care market into a shape that pleases politicians. We would do better to embrace the Empowering Patients First Act’s free market solution and allow consumers to make their own health care choices.**

Sincerely,

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