

Amendment to establish new Committee on Health Care to be offered at Republican Organizing Conference

From: The Honorable Doc Hastings

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Amendment to be Offered at Republican Organizing Conference to Consolidate and Establish a New "Committee on Health Care"

Dear Republican Colleague:

As our Republican House Majority prepares to grapple with another four years of the Obama Presidency, our Conference has an opportunity to aggressively target Obamacare and the threats it poses to America's economy and our freedoms. We also have an opportunity to ensure Medicare is protected from Obamacare and that it is strengthened for current and future retirees. How is this possible when President Obama and Senate Democrats stand in the way? The answer is we take decisive action over that which we control entirely: the organization and operation of the House of Representatives.

By taking the simple and dramatic step of establishing a new House Committee on Health Care, into which all health care jurisdiction is consolidated, we can most effectively challenge Obamacare and create a forum for generating positive health care solutions for our nation. This would be a fully-empowered permanent standing Committee with complete legislative and jurisdictional authority over health care – not a temporary, duplicative or toothless "select" Committee.

As the Majority Party, we control the organization of Committees. Today's committee structure and alignment is largely the relic of decades of Democrat control. That's why when a Member introduces a bill to repeal Obamacare, it is literally referred to eight separate Committees for consideration. Today, Medicare and Medicaid make up 21 percent of the federal budget and Obamacare will soon claim its share, yet oversight of these programs is essentially relegated to two Subcommittees under the Energy & Commerce and Ways & Means Committees. Speaker Pelosi didn't work through regular order and eight Committees and multiple subcommittees to create Obamacare – it was devised behind closed doors and rammed through the House. Upon retaking the House Majority from Pelosi-led Democrats, our Republican Majority has been committed to open and transparent legislating on major issues. If our Republican Majority is going to best tackle Obamacare and our nation's health care challenges, we must first reform the House and the antiquated Committee structure built up by Democrats.

By consolidating health care jurisdiction into a new, permanent standing House Committee on Health Care, it would possess the full oversight and legislative authority necessary to:

- elevate and ensure relentless oversight of Obamacare – all regulations and actions taken by the Obama Administration;
- lay the groundwork for Obamacare repeal and replacement in 2017 when President Obama is out of office;
- establish a forum for health care solutions that are centered on individual choice and freedom;
- prioritize saving and strengthening Medicare for current and future retirees; and
- focus attention on improving Medicaid and other federal health programs to provide a better result for beneficiaries and American taxpayers.

There will be apprehension by some that this is too hard to accomplish, that it's too disruptive, or that such action needs more time to be more carefully thought out. To critics it should be asked: how can we possibly hope to repeal Obamacare if we cannot even reform the House over which we have total control?

Change isn't easy, and it doesn't get easier with time. The fact is the Republican Conference has the ability to make this change right now as we organize for the 113th Congress...to establish a new Committee to target Obamacare...to save and strengthen Medicare...and to advance new solutions for federal health care programs and challenges. If the Conference votes this Thursday to approve the amendment to Conference Rules that will be proposed to establish this Committee, there are nearly two months for it to be implemented before the start of the new Congress.

The one domain that Republicans control in Washington, DC is the House of Representatives– and if we are committed to reforming the federal government, to repealing Obamacare and to changing the way Congress functions, then now is the time to seize this opportunity.

Sincerely,

Doc Hastings
Member of Congress

Reid Ribble
Member of Congress

Rob Woodall
Member of Congress