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In Case You Missed It

Teague needs to vote against health-care bill

Steve Pearce: Ultimately this health-care bill will destroy jobs in New Mexico and raise taxes on families and small businesses. In an already struggling economy, New Mexico cannot afford to shoulder the additional financial burden of government-run health care.

Albuquerque, NM— Today, an op-ed written by former Congressman Steve Pearce (R-NM) was published on the prominent political blog, NM Politics.net. In his piece, Congressman Pearce outlines the reasons why Harry Teague should vote against the Senate healthcare bill.

Teague needs to vote against health-care bill

NM Politics.net

By Steve Pearce

March 19, 2010

Read this online at: <http://www.nmpolitics.net/index/2010/03/teague-needs-to-vote-against-health-care-legislation/>

The vote on the health-care legislation is expected to occur this week as soon as Speaker Pelosi secures the 216 votes needed to pass the House. New Mexico Congressman [Harry Teague](#) is one of the last undecided House Democrats whose vote will decide whether or not the health care bill passes.

Congressman Teague says he hasn't decided how he'll vote on this bill. But what Congressman Teague needs to remember is that he represents the interests of New Mexicans, and this health-care legislation will have severe, negative impacts.

I support health-care reform efforts to improve our system. It affects the financial, physical and mental health of New Mexicans. However, along with many New Mexicans,

I do not support the current health-care legislation. A government-run health care program poses threats to hard-working Americans and their access to health care.

Ultimately this health-care bill will destroy jobs in New Mexico and raise taxes on families and small businesses. In an already struggling economy, New Mexico cannot afford to shoulder the additional financial burden of government-run health care.

In addition to increased taxes and job loss, the health-care bill will cut Medicare by \$500 billion, slashing the care that seniors currently receive. It will add \$500 billion to the federal deficit by 2024 and radically increase government spending. The bill will even force people out of the existing health coverage they like.

Uninsured individuals will be required to pay \$8,500 to buy policies, or face a 2.5 percent fine on their income if they don't get insurance. People will be sent to jail if they don't pay their fines. In summary, the health care bill is a disaster.

We need commonsense changes

All this being said, finding affordable health care is a real concern. I realize the health-care debate has been dragging on for a long time and many people are ready for an answer. But a one-size-fits-all government-run health care system is not a solution. We need commonsense changes that will lower costs and increase access.

We need to start over with health-care reform and make small, incremental fixes. We need to implement lawsuit-abuse protection and extend coverage to individuals with pre-existing conditions at reasonable prices. We need to encourage health savings accounts that can be used at any age for medical costs, including premiums, deductibles, office visits and prescriptions. Allow portability of policies from one job to the next and allow competition across state lines to lower mandates that keep insurance costs so high. Association health plans are also a good idea that was blocked by Democrats during the six years while I was in Congress.

The New York Times recently reported that the congressmen who fall in line and help Nancy Pelosi pass the health care bill will receive top priority for campaign cash.

It is not too late to change the future of our health-care system. It is not too late to tell Congressman Harry Teague that we want him to vote NO on the current health care legislation. We need to let him know our concerns: the economy, jobs, and the out-of-control government spending. Remind him that he represents New Mexico, not any political party, not Nancy Pelosi and certainly not his own special interests.

[Pearce](#) is a former member of the U.S. House of Representatives. He is seeking election to New Mexico's Second District.

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