

**Sent:** Sun, 06 Sep 2009 11:32:35 -0400  
**From:** "Axelrod, David M." <axelrod\_d@who.eop.gov>  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Bcc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Mr. Axelrod-Tell Me How You'll Fix Things w/o a Public Option

P6/b(6)

Mr. Gonsalves, apparently you weren't listening carefully if you thought I said the President was giving up on the public option. In fact, I said repeatedly that he thinks it was important and valuable to bring competition and choice to the insurance exchange we are creating. I also said it isn't the whole of health insurance reform. We have to do much more.

As for your situation, the insurance reforms we are advocating would put a cap on out-of-pocket expenses, stop insurance companies from adding charges for preventive tests and care, and prevent insurance companies from dropping people who are seriously ill.

It would be a shame if our efforts to help protect the 160 million people who have insurance today, and make insurance affordable for those who don't have it, would fail because of misinformation and over-heated rhetoric.

Thanks for your thoughts,  
David Axelrod

----- Original Message -----

**From:** Gregg Gonsalves <[REDACTED]>  
**To:** Axelrod, David M.; Jarrett, Valerie; eemanuel@mail.cc.nih.gov <eemanuel@mail.cc.nih.gov>; dplouffe@akpdmedia.com <dplouffe@akpdmedia.com>; terri.mccullough@mail.house.gov <terri.mccullough@mail.house.gov>; DeParle, Nancy-Ann M.; sharon.parrott@hhs.gov <sharon.parrott@hhs.gov>; Favreau, Jon; linda.douglass@hhs.gov <linda.douglass@hhs.gov>; michael.hash@hhs.gov <michael.hash@hhs.gov>  
**Sent:** Sun Sep 06 11:20:22 2009  
**Subject:** Mr. Axelrod-Tell Me How You'll Fix Things w/o a Public Option

Dear Mr. Axelrod-

I saw you on television this morning telling us how the President can live without the public option. Can you tell me how average, middle class Americans can live without it though? I have insurance-

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] And yes, I have it good compared to most people, so many of whom are uninsured completely. Do you think once you've given up on the public option, industry will submit to any kind of stringent regulation or cost-controls?

I wrote my first check to a politician to the President because I believed in him. Now he won't even stand up for us and seems to be playing a politics of appeasement with Republicans, triangulation with those who voted for him in November and footsie with the health insurance industry.

He can be a hero for our times, the President who brought us real health care reform or he can be, well, a clone of Bill Clinton--not the one who "lost" health care reform, but the one who gave us welfare reform, and weakened the safety net for the poor that generations of Democrats, from FDR to Ted Kennedy struggled to build.  
Gregg

On Wed, Sep 2, 2009 at 6:25 AM, Gregg Gonsalves<gregg.gonsalves@gmail.com> wrote:  
> I know one voice from out beyond the Beltway doesn't matter in these  
> heady debates about health care, where political fortunes are  
> calculated almost in the abstract.

> But on the slim chance that citizens have sway over those they elect  
> (and give money to!), I hope you can tell the President that dropping  
> a robust public option from his demands to Congress is a terrible  
> idea. He must included it in his upcoming speech to the American  
> people and tell people why it is important. He will have the support  
> of all of us who care about health care, depend on it.  
> I am on the public option of ADAP (the federal AIDS Drug Assistance  
> Program)--without a federal safety net for my health, I'd be spending  
> down my savings on the \$10,000 yearly course of antiretroviral  
> medicines I need to stay alive and would have to drop out of school to  
> go back to work to get private insurance (and still pay 80/20). Last  
> week, three dozen people in my apartment building met to discuss how  
> to support the President on health care. 90% of the people in the room  
> were senior citizens--they want Medicare for all. I am in school with  
> several veterans of the Iraq War--they get great care through the VA.  
> Private industry will always find a way out of serving the sick, the  
> old and the injured, even if they can't exclude them outright, through  
> high premiums, high deductibles and co-pays.  
> Do the right thing. I want President Obama to be the one who gave us  
> real health care reform--not something dressed up to look like it, but  
> the change we need. We will know the difference.  
> If he can deliver the real thing, then he goes down in history as the  
> one who did it after all others failed before him. Otherwise, we lose  
> the last great chance for reform in a generation and the political  
> moment has been squandered. The choice of a legacy is his. Our fate  
> rests in your hands.  
> Good luck.  
> Gregg  
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> Gregg Gonsalves  
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Gregg Gonsalves

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