



Dear Ms. Tchen,

NOW-NYC would like to express its deep disappointment that the latest health care proposal being put forth by President Obama does nothing to address the unfair and burdensome restrictions that the Senate's final bill places on access to insurance coverage for abortion—a legal medical procedure. We urge that the President take action to ensure that women's reproductive health is not jeopardized in health care reform.

NOW-NYC opposes the language of the Senate bill because:

- 1) States will have the ability to BAN abortion coverage on the health exchanges in their state.** This means that poor women and any women who purchase insurance on the exchange in many states will not be able to get coverage for abortion. Since most Americans will be required to buy insurance, this also means that women will be forced to pay for insurance that does not cover all of their health care needs. Women with troubled pregnancies who are advised or choose to terminate their pregnancies in the best interest of their families will have the double burden of losing a pregnancy and incurring thousands of dollars in medical debt.
- 2) Women in states that retain abortion coverage on the exchanges will be forced to write separate checks to pay for abortion coverage.** This is discriminatory, creates a stigma around abortion, poses privacy issues, and will result in many women not obtaining coverage. Who is going to walk into the human resources department at their place of employment and say, "Hi, I'm here to sign up for the supplemental abortion coverage."
- 3) Insurance companies may not be willing or able to continue to offer abortion coverage.** The patchwork of regulations and the big administrative burdens placed on insurance companies that cover abortion could result in a total loss of insurance coverage for abortion.

While NOW-NYC is strongly in favor of health care reform that will eliminate gender rating, remove restrictions on coverage to pre-existing conditions (including pregnancy and domestic violence) and expand access to millions, we cannot support a version of the bill that denies women full access to health care.

Sincerely,

Jane Manning
President
NOW-NYC

Sonia Ossorio
Executive Director
NOW-NYC