

"A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death." Martin Luther King, Jr. 1967

"Of all forms of inequality, injustice in health (care) is the most shocking and the most inhumane." Martin Luther King, Jr. 1966

Dear Sue,

We write to thank Senator Hagan for her efforts in support of health care reform and to continue our conversation with her. We would like to pursue two paths, based on your suggestions. First, we would like to continue the productive conversation that we have shared with you, adding Michelle Adams as a participant. Second, if speaking with her in North Carolina is unlikely, we ask if you could arrange a conference call with her. Our responses to your emails follow.

Universal health care. You have said that the Senator “does not believe universal health care is the solution for the U.S.” As you know, we believe that health care is a human right. Furthermore, it is well established that enlarging the pool of the insured can bring costs down. Can you please elaborate on the Senator’s position?

Budget neutrality. We agree with the importance of wisely investing our national resources. We also know that budget neutrality is waived for matters deemed to be of pressing national importance. Because lack of health insurance kills 45,000 Americans each year, we believe health care is such an issue. Is the Senator willing to apply the budget neutrality standard to our occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan? If not, why are these military operations more important than saving the lives of those of us who remain peacefully at home?

Robust public option. Although the Senator has supported the public option found in the HELP bill, we are concerned that she also has provided verbal support for triggers, co-op models, and opt-outs, which can only weaken the public option. In addition to expanding coverage, a robust public option, available to all, can decrease costs by increasing both competition and efficiency. As her party’s State Executive Committee resolved on August 29, private health insurance systems typically spend approximately 33 percent of their cost on the administration of such plans, in contrast to the dramatically lower costs of 3 percent expended by government administered plans, such as Medicare. Can we count on the Senator as a strong voice for a robust public option?

We look forward to your responses to these questions and to an opportunity to speak with the Senator. We hope to be able to report good news to our regular Meeting for Business on November 15.

From The Peace and Social Concerns Committee of the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting, 9 November 2009:

Ruth Zalph, Buffie Webber, Miriam Thompson, Dirk Spruyt, Ann Shy, Hart Pillow, Tom Munk, Hank Maiden, Jennifer Leeman, Michael Grathwohl, Deborah Gibbs, Hank Elkins, Kay Eager, Max Drake, Asta Crowe, Francis Coyle, Caleb Cole, Ed Brown

Please consider adding your individual voice to this conversation. Call the Capitol to thank Rep. Price for his vote, to encourage Sen. Burr to allow a vote, and to share your personal thoughts, leadings, and experiences with Sen. Hagan.

Toll-free Capitol numbers: 877-851-6437; 800-828-0498; 800-833-6354