

This week, the House is expected to vote on the health care bill passed by the Senate in December. I have a number of serious concerns with this proposal, including its overall cost, tax increases, and unprecedented government intrusion on Americans' health care freedom. While these issues are important, I want to highlight another major problem with the Senate health care bill: the fact that it would, for the first time, force taxpayers to subsidize health plans that cover abortion.

Although Americans are deeply divided on the question of whether abortion should be legal, there is a broad consensus that abortion on demand should not be financed with taxpayer dollars. That consensus is reflected in Congress's longstanding support for the Hyde Amendment, a rule that bars federal funds from being used directly or indirectly to pay for elective abortions. Last November, the House passed its version of health care legislation only after approving Democratic Congressman Bart Stupak's amendment to preserve the Hyde rules in the proposed new system of health insurance subsidies. Unfortunately, this measure was not included in the Senate health care bill, and Democratic leaders in the House have made clear that they intend to move forward with legislation that does not include the Stupak amendment. While the Senate bill's provisions with respect to abortion coverage are confusing and subject to debate, it is clear that the Senate bill would undermine the Hyde Amendment by authorizing government subsidies for health plans that provide coverage of abortion.

Abortion is not health care, and people who believe abortion is a grave moral tragedy should not be compelled to fund it with their tax dollars. I commend Congressman Stupak for his leadership on this issue in the face of strong opposition from many members of his own party, and I hope the House of Representatives will vote to uphold the convictions of millions of pro-life Americans and reject taxpayer funding of abortion.