

# Sander Levin

U.S. House of Representatives  
9<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, Michigan

February 22, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Brady  
Chairman  
Committee on Ways and Means  
1102 Longworth Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Brady:

I am writing to strongly urge that the Committee, and the American public, be given sufficient time to evaluate any proposal to significantly change health care in our nation.

In 2009, you joined in dissenting views on health reform legislation considered by the Committee, saying that legislation should not be "unnecessarily rushed through the Committee without proper understanding" and that "the issues are too important and the decisions too difficult to act in haste and without the full range of information necessary to make such critical policy choices." I agree and believe it is therefore imperative that any legislation coming before the Committee meet at least three tests of transparency: (1) a 4-week review of legislative language before a committee markup; (2) a hearing specifically on that legislative proposal; and (3) a separate hearing with the Secretary of HHS to discuss relevant issues. Democrats met all three of these standards when the precursor to the Affordable Care Act came through the Committee in 2009. Republicans argued for even more then, so it would seem untenable for you to provide much less now.

On May 6, 2009, the Committee held a hearing with HHS Secretary Sebelius to discuss health care reform. To date, the majority has not expressed any intention to hold a hearing with current HHS Secretary Tom Price before considering legislation. On June 19, 2009, the Committee publicly released draft legislative language, four weeks prior to the Committee marking up legislation. By contrast, the current majority has not released any legislative text



on its plan to repeal current law, only a general outline without any details. And finally, in addition to holding a half dozen hearings in 2009 on various health reform issues, the Committee held a hearing on June 24 to specifically examine the legislative text released earlier that month. At this point, we have heard no intention from the majority to hold a hearing after you release legislative language. In fact, the Committee has not held a single health-related hearing this year, and the Health Subcommittee, of which I am the Ranking Member, has yet to hold even an organizational meeting.

The American people have a right to know the full effect of legislation that might drastically affect their health care coverage and costs. If the Committee fails to meet these basic tests of transparency, they will be denied that opportunity. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Sander M. Levin