



**Independent Electrical
Contractors**

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November 4, 2009

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 2,700 contractor members of the Independent Electrical Contractors (IEC), I am writing to urge your opposition to H.R. 3962, the *Affordable Health Care for America Act*. This legislation would radically reform our nation's health care system through unreasonable government mandates on individuals and business owners; a government-run health insurance plan; and increased taxes and fines on employers and individuals. **IEC will key vote H.R. 3962.**

Our contractor members are proud of the competitive benefits and wages that they offer to their employees, and IEC has long supported common sense reforms to our nation's health care system with the hopes of driving down costs, increasing efficiencies, and lessening the stress that providing quality health insurance options places on both employers and employees. IEC has been a vocal advocate of market-driven reforms such as Association Health Plans and medical liability reform, and our members have taken time away from their businesses to testify before Congress about their struggles to provide quality benefits to their employees while also managing their business.

Unfortunately, H.R. 3962 would do nothing to reduce the cost of health care or make it easier for small business owners to provide their employees with quality health care options. In fact, as Congressional Budget Office (CBO) Director Doug Elmendorf noted when analyzing similar legislation (H.R. 3200), these proposals would actually increase the long-term costs of health care for our nation.

Specifically, IEC opposes H.R. 3962 because it contains an employer mandate, requiring employers to provide health insurance that meets a minimum standard or be subject to an 8% payroll tax. Furthermore, the fact that the definition of a "minimum standard" will be established by the government threatens small business owners who currently provide their employees with the best possible plan, though that may not meet this arbitrary "minimum standard." These provisions ignore the reality of the current business world, where employers know that they must provide quality benefits in order to be competitive, and do so to the best of their ability, based on their specific business models.

Also, IEC opposes the creation of a government plan, or "public option," which will directly compete with the benefits packages offered by our contractor members and other small business owners and distort the insurance market place. While cost and limited purchasing options are

most often the highest hurdle that small business owners face in their struggle to provide quality insurance, it defies both experience and common sense to think that the government can “compete” with anything other than a distinct and detrimental advantage over current market participants. This government option will only serve as the catalyst for creating a health care system where all Americans *must* go to the government in order to receive care.

Finally, IEC opposes the proposed tax hikes that will be used to help pay the more than \$1 trillion price tag carried by H.R. 3962. While numerous revenue raisers have been suggested, we are most immediately concerned with the income tax surcharge to be levied on the “rich.” This ill-conceived tax hike supposedly targets the “rich,” but will actually do the most harm to the small business owners and job creators. And, to make matters worse, those impacted could possibly be the same people who are subject to the previously mentioned 8% payroll tax.

Again, IEC supports common sense, market-driven reforms to our nation’s health care system in order to reduce costs and increase efficiencies. As H.R. 3962 does not meet this criteria, IEC strongly urges your opposition to this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Worth". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "B".

Brian Worth
Vice President
Government and Public Affairs