

I want to talk to you about two proposed health care reforms that I have been hearing a lot about from my constituents – commonly called the Kucinich amendment and the Weiner Amendment. Both of these amendments are changes to H.R. 3200, the House's health care reform bill, and both deal with single payer health care.

The Kucinich Amendment allows states to adopt single payer health care systems for their residents. These plans would replace the federal exchange for those covered, and must meet the minimum standards of the exchange. The Kucinich Amendment was adopted by the Education and Labor Committee by a vote of 27-19.

The Weiner Amendment would substitute H.R. 676 for H.R. 3200. H.R. 676 would institute a single payer health care system to cover all Americans. Health care providers would remain private but would be reimbursed by the government for care provided to participants.

The Weiner Amendment was offered in the Energy and Commerce Committee's markup, and then withdrawn. Speaker Pelosi and E&C Chair Henry Waxman have pledged to ensure that the Weiner amendment will receive an up or down vote on the House floor. When it does, I fully intend to vote for it.

The version of H.R. 3200 that will be presented on the floor is still being compiled. After the three committee's products are reconciled, the Rules Committee, which I chair, will determine the rules for debate and amendment of the bill on the House floor.

Progressives have been trying to secure universal health care for Americans for nearly a century, and we are now the last industrialized country in the world to not provide this critical service to its citizens. It is imperative that we take advantage of this opportunity and achieve meaningful reform.

It is important to me that this bill goes through a thorough and fair process of debate. I am also committed to shepherding a bill through the Rules Committee that will bring relief to the millions of Americans struggling to afford the health care they need for themselves and their families.

I have been working hard with other members of leadership to put together the strongest bill possible. Every day we have been making this bill better, and I will be sure to keep you updated

as the House moves forward.