



## Republican National Committee

**Michael S. Steele**  
Chairman

November 19, 2009

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing to you today to express our outrage at the insensitivity towards women your White House has shown on the issue of health care. Your Administration's attempt to ration and limit access to potentially life-saving mammograms is profoundly dangerous. This thinly veiled attempt to save money by limiting mammograms has the effect of placing a dollar value on a human life.

Even worse, decisions like this are at the heart of the concern Americans have with a government run healthcare system because they cause the most harm to the least fortunate. Women rely on programs like Medicaid for access to annual mammograms. Limiting access to annual tests unnecessarily jeopardizes the health of women and places an unfair burden on those living near or below the poverty level.

This government panel claims to be concerned with the anxiety caused by mammograms resulting in false positives. That anxiety, however, pales in comparison to the threat posed by an *unknown* positive. It is clear that this decision is just the first step toward total government rationing of health care. Today it is mammograms. Tomorrow it will be prostate exams. In the future it will be complete government control of the tests we receive, the doctors we see and the care the government decides that we deserve.

In response to the firestorm of criticism elicited by your Administration's new recommendations against routine annual mammograms for women aged 40-49 years old, your Communications Director, Dan Pfeiffer, took to the official White House blog to attack the motives of the critics.

We find it entirely inappropriate for you to use WhiteHouse.gov as a platform to unleash your attack dogs against Americans who simply are concerned about ensuring proper care for themselves and their loved ones. Pfeiffer wrote: "One of the hallmark

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tactics from opponents of health insurance reform has been to grab onto any convenient piece of information and twist it into some misguided attack on reform, no matter how unrelated it may actually be.”

Is your White House saying that the American Cancer Society and American College of Radiology, who have both come out against these recommendations, are more interested in scoring political points than avoiding preventable deaths from cancer? How about Democrat Congressmen Frank Pallone and Debbie Wasserman Schultz? When they expressed their outrage at the USPSTF’s decisions, were they using it as an excuse for “some misguided attack on reform?”

Adding insult to injury, in addition to Pfeiffer’s accusation that anyone who opposed the ruling is arguing in bad faith, he made several misleading claims about government rationing of health care under the new government-run health care experiment you plan to impose on the country. Pfeiffer wrote: “Under the health insurance reform legislation, the USPTF [sic] would have no power to deny insurance coverage in any way. Their recommendations would be used in health reform to identify effective clinical preventive services.” This is far from the truth. In Section 222 of H.R. 3962, which you endorsed, the task force is empowered to set the minimum benefit levels that every insurance plan must follow. Government mandates of benefit coverage would unavoidably lead to a system of identical plan benefits.

In your speech to a joint session of Congress, you said worries about government rationing were “a lie, plain and simple.” We hope this example shows you how well-intentioned decision-makers can easily end up a rationing board. Your doctor doesn’t have to take the government’s advice today, but he or she won’t have a choice if the government-run health care plans you are pushing through Congress are successful. So we hope you will join with Congressional Republicans in scrapping these plans and starting over with real, bipartisan reforms that will lower costs and increase access to care.

Sincerely,



Michael Steele  
Chairman



Jan Larimer  
Co-Chairwoman

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