

“Never place a period  
where God has placed a comma”  
(Grace Allen)



God is still speaking.

**PARKROSE COMMUNITY  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



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August 10, 2009

The Honorable Barack Obama  
c/o Mr. Joshua DuBois  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The cause of providing universal health care to all Americans is one of the most challenging issues faced by this generation. Your leadership on this matter has been important. I am writing to encourage you to hold firm on the notion that a strong public option is needed for health care reform to be successful. Like you, if starting from scratch I would advocate a single payer system. But that is out of reach. A strong public option, however, is the only tool that will bring America closer to the goal of covering 100% of our citizens. Many voices – from Republicans to Blue Dog Democrats – are urging that the public option be dropped or weakened. I urge you to expend what political capital is necessary not to allow them to win this important policy debate.

Mr. President, as a minister I visit hospitals on a regular basis and talk with parishioners from my church scared about how they will pay their medical bills. Some debate whether or not to seek treatment based simply on the cost alone. In my work with people experiencing homelessness, I've seen critically ill people released from hospitals and on to the streets when they truly needed care. I've worked with people suffering from serious mental health problems and addiction issues turned away from treatment because they lack insurance or the waiting lists are months long.

Finally, let me say that I appreciate very much that the White House has reached out to leaders of religious communities to discuss health care reform. For the faith community, health care reform is about a ministry of healing. How we treat the least of these in society is akin to how we treat God, says Jesus. As you have said yourself, health care reform is a moral issue. Please do everything in your power to make sure that a strong public option is included in any bill you sign. I can be reached at 971-322-7920 or [rev@chuckcurrie.com](mailto:rev@chuckcurrie.com).

Your brother in Christ,

The Rev. Chuck Currie

cc: The Rev. Peg Chamberlin, The Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon, Mr. Harry Knox, The Rev. Jim Wallis, The Rev. Dr. Sharon Watkins, The Rev. John Thomas