



Dave Heineman
Governor

July 21, 2009

The Honorable Mike Johanns

U.S. Senator

404 Russell Senate Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Benjamin Nelson

U.S. Senator

720 Hart Building

Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Nelson and Senator Johanns:

I just returned from the National Governors Association meeting and much of the discussion among Governors was about health care. As former Governors, I thought you might appreciate the information that we received from the NGA staff. Attached are seven handouts.

The handouts and the discussion among Governors reflect concerns about funding, cost, Medicaid, employer mandate, and insurance reforms. The single most important concern was this legislation would be the biggest unfunded mandate on the fifty states in the history of our country. President Obama has told the Governors that health care reform must not be an unfunded mandate for the states. I am in strong agreement that an unfunded health care mandate would be unfair to state taxpayers.

In handout 4, NGA Executive Director Ray Schepach outlines concerns about Medicaid in the context of health care reform. He indicates that if the Medicaid expansion becomes an unfunded mandate, states are likely to reduce their investments in education. That would be very unfortunate and as Schepach writes "Reducing state education investment will lower U.S. competitiveness, productivity and real income of U.S. citizens. This is not good long-run policy for the U.S."

While I have other concerns about health care reform, one of the most troubling aspects is the potential for an unfunded mandate on the states. I strongly urge you to avoid an unfunded mandate on the states. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dave Heineman

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