

WASHINGTON, DC – The Supreme Court of the United States was certainly in the limelight this past week as it published its ruling on the President's health care overhaul law, or "Obamacare." And as many of you all saw, the Court ruled by a 5-4 vote that the bill was largely constitutional. A lot of partisan rhetoric flew around Washington in the aftermath of this ruling, and I believe that this rhetoric is unhelpful to the overall debate. What we simply cannot ignore is the fact that there were many Americans last Thursday who were not paying attention to the Supreme Court at all. They were in towns and on main streets across America, putting in long hours at their jobs, or driving from place to place trying desperately to find employment so that they can feed their families. The health care reform debate is not about politics; it is about ensuring that folks across the country can afford and access the medical care that they and their families need. The Supreme Court's decision on the case read, "We do not consider whether the [President's health care law] embodies sound policies. That judgment is entrusted to the Nation's elected leaders." This means that it is up to Congress, and therefore, the American people, to determine which "sound policies" will truly reduce the cost of health care.

Since the beginning of this debate, I have been in close contact with folks across the First District, meeting with doctors, patients, nurses, and others in the health care industry to discuss the factors driving up the costs of health care. These factors must be addressed in order to bring costs down and increase overall health coverage, and I truly believe that rational solutions are not dictated by political party. In terms of health care reform, there are factors which many of us can and have agreed on since the beginning of this debate. For example, I support preservation of access to care for individuals with pre-existing conditions, as well as ensuring that children up to the age of 26 can stay on their parents' plan. Responsible medical liability reform is another commonsense solution that folks agree on, as well as allowing the sale of health insurance across state lines. These are simple, specific issues that can be passed with bipartisan support. A 2000-page bill that was written behind closed doors and raises taxes on middle class families is simply not the solution to reducing health care costs and increasing overall medical coverage.

There is absolutely no doubt in anyone's mind that our health care system is in need of reform. But the reform our nation undertakes has got to be responsible. The President's health care overhaul simply will not solve the problem. Instead, it will increase taxes on middle class families and small businesses who are struggling to make ends meet, while at the same time cut funding from Medicare and add over a trillion dollars to our nation's deficit. It is unaffordable and unworkable for Americans and for our country as a whole. That is why I voted against Obamacare in 2010, and that is why I believe it must be repealed immediately so that

reasonable, commonsense steps can be taken to make health care coverage affordable for individuals and families.

As the debate continues, I hope that you will keep in touch with me to tell me your ideas and solutions. It is critical that we work together to pursue rational solutions to reduce the cost of health care, improve access to care and improve the quality of care. I can be reached by telephone at (202) 225-4261, through my website (www.wittman.house.gov), via Facebook (www.facebook.com/reprobwittman), or on Twitter (www.twitter.com/robwittman).

Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee where he is the Chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

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