

# Reps Demand: No IMAB In Health Bill

*Jan. 15—At least 99 Members of Congress have signed a letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) declaring they will oppose any health care bill that includes an Independent Medical Advisory Panel. In the Reid Senate bill, the panel is modeled on the British National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence, which in turn is modeled on the Hitler's*



*Rep. Richard Neal*

*T4 program of October 1939. It would set up a board independent of Congress to determine what gets paid for under Medicare, which, under Obamacare, would be slashed by \$500 billion over the next ten years.*

*Rep. Richard E. Neal (D-Mass.) began circulating the letter last July.*

Dear Madam Speaker:

We, the undersigned members of Congress, write to voice our strong opposition to the “Independent Medicare Advisory Council (IMAC) Act of 2009” and the “Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) Reform Act of 2009” (H.R.2718, S.1110, S.1380), and the inclusion of any of these proposals in the “America’s Affordable Health Choices Act” (H.R.3200), or any other legislation.

The role that Congress has traditionally played in crafting the Medicare program to provide the best policies for beneficiaries is one that has had a significant impact in our communities. Through the legislative process, Members are able to represent the needs of their communities by improving benefits for seniors and the disabled, affecting policies that fill the health-care workforce pipelines, and ensuring that hospitals are equipped to care for diverse populations across our individual districts. Such a responsibility is one that is not taken, nor should be given away, lightly.

These proposals would eliminate the current advisory role of MedPAC and severely limit Congressional oversight of the Medicare program. By placing this au-

thority within the executive branch, with no Congressional oversight or judicial review, the legislation eliminates the transparency of Congressional hearings and debate. Without the open and transparent legislative process, Medicare beneficiaries and the range of providers who care for them would be greatly limited in their ability to help develop and implement new policies that improve the health care of our nation's seniors.

The creation of this commission would also eliminate state and community input into the Medicare program, removing the ability to develop and implement policies expressly applicable to their different patient populations. These national policies that would flow from such a commission would ignore the significant differences and health care needs of states and communities. Geographic and demographic variances that exist in our nation's health-care system and patient populations would be dangerously disregarded. Furthermore, all providers in all states would be required to comply, even if these policies were detrimental to the patients they serve. Such a commission could not only threaten the ability of Medicare beneficiaries, but of all Americans, to access the care they need.

These legislative proposals would also limit Congress's ability to work with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to create and implement demonstration and pilot projects designed to evaluate new and advanced policies such as at home care for the elderly, the patient-centered medical home, new less invasive surgical procedures, and collaborative efforts between hospitals and physicians, and programs designed to eliminate fraud and abuse. Additionally, these proposals eliminate Members' ability to represent the needs of their own districts and states by addressing issues such as current and future provider workforce needs, the classification of hospitals that may qualify as critical access or rural hospitals, and obtaining critical health care services such as home health, ambulances, trauma centers, and nursing homes.

We urge you to reject the inclusion of these proposals or any like proposal in H.R.3200 or any other legislation.

Sincerely,  
Richard E. Neal

*Signers of the letter include both liberal Democrats and conservative Republicans. The list was provided to EIR by a Congressional aide Jan. 14:*

**Ariz.:** Democrat Raul Grijalva  
**Ark.:** Republican John Boozman

**Calif.:** Democrats Judy Chu, Susan Davis, Sam Farr, Bob Filner, Mike Honda, Doris Matsui, Laura Richardson, Linda Sanchez, Pete Stark, Mike Thompson, Lynn Woolsey; Republicans Brian Bilbray, Ken Calvert, Dana Rohrabacher, Mary Bono Mack

**Conn.:** Democrat Joseph Courtney

**D.C.:** Democrat Eleanor Holmes Norton

**Fla.:** Democrats Corrine Brown, Alan Grayson, Kendrick Meek; Republicans Ginny Brown-Waite, Vern Buchanan, Bill Posey

**Ga.:** Democrats John Lewis, Hank Johnson; Republican Phil Gingrey

**Ill.:** Democrat Bobby Rush; Republican Aaron Schock

**Ind.:** Republicans Steve Buyer, Mark Souder

**Ky.:** Republican Brett Guthrie

**La.:** Democrat Charlie Melancon; Republicans Rodney Alexander, Bill Cassidy, John Fleming

**Mass.:** Democrats Michael Capuano, William Delahunt, Barney Frank, Steven Lynch, Edward Markey, James McGovern, John Olver, John Tierney

**Mich.:** Republican Mike Rogers

**Mo.:** Democrats Russ Carnahan, William Lacy Clay, Emanuel Cleaver

**Nev.:** Democrat Shelley Berkley

**N.J.:** Democrats Albio Sires, Bill Pascrell, Donald Payne

**N.Y.:** Democrats Gary Ackerman, Tim Bishop, Yvette Clarke, Joseph Crowley, Eliot Engel, John Hall, Maurice Hinchey, Steve Israel, Nita Lowey, Dan Maffei, Carolyn Maloney, Eric Massa, Greg Meeks, Jerrold Nadler, Edolphus Towns; Republican Christopher Lee

**N.C.:** Democrat G.K. Butterfield; Republicans Howard Coble, Walter Jones

**Ohio:** Democrat Marcia Fudge; Republican Patrick Tiberi

**Penn.:** Democrats Chaka Fattah, Tim Holden, Allyson Schwartz; Republican Todd Russell Platts

**Tenn.:** Republicans Marsha Blackburn, Phil Roe

**Tex.:** Democrats Gene Green, Sheila Jackson Lee; Republicans Mike Burgess, Ron Paul, Pete Sessions

**Va.:** Republican Bob Goodlatte

**Vir. Is.:** Democrat Donna Christensen

**Wash.:** Democrat Jim McDermott; Republican Dave Reichert

**W. Va.:** Democrat Nick Rahall; Republican Shelley Moore Capito

**Wisc.:** Democrat Steve Kagen