



1701 West End Avenue, Suite 300 Nashville, TN 37203 Phone: 615.254.4799 www.billhaslam.com

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To Our Tennessee Congressional Delegation:

I know some members of our delegation have been intimately involved in the current health care legislation battle from the beginning, and I thank those of you who have worked to stop this legislation. We need real healthcare reform in America, particularly in the areas of accessibility and cost that place an unfair burden on so many Tennesseans and Americans, but this current legislation is the wrong approach.

As we are now in the "11th hour", I am writing to urge you to fight through the weekend against the forced passage of federal health care legislation that could have potentially devastating effects on the state we all love and call home. As the Mayor of Knoxville and a candidate for governor in 2010, I am watching the battle closely and I hope, as our elected representatives in Washington, you will do what is best for Tennessee by working together to oppose this legislation.

I personally believe the House, Senate, and President Obama's versions are ill-conceived, and as elected officials from Tennessee the number one concern we all must have is the damaging impact this will have on our great state. With an estimated additional cost to Tennessee of approximately \$750 million over the next five years, this is an unfunded mandate we can't afford.

Despite Tennessee's fiscal responsibility, this could force our budget to grow beyond our control, encroach on other important state priorities such as education and economic development, and endanger our fiscal health. Governor Bredesen said it best when he described this legislation as the "mother of all unfunded mandates."

Washington needs to listen to the people. Tennesseans are tired of the spending, and tired of Washington sending us the bill for their bad ideas. I've traveled to all 95 counties in this race for governor, and as I've said from the beginning, citizens across the state don't want to bear the burden of Washington's out of control spending. At this critical moment, I urge you to do everything you can to oppose this bill and use your office to fight against it.

Again, I want to thank those of you who have been fighting this disastrous bill from the beginning. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Working together we can stop this legislation and give Tennessee a chance to control its own future.

With warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Haslam". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bill Haslam
Mayor of Knoxville