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November 9, 2013

Dear Congressman Courtney:

Several weeks ago, I wrote to you regarding President Obama's promise that "if you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan. Period." I wrote that I was happy with my current plan and described the reasons I liked it. I also asked you to write me a letter assuring me that what our President said was true and that I would be able to keep my plan. You never wrote back to me.

Your office did, however, send an e-mail with the phone number of one of your staff members. I called her and summarized what I had already written to you. She said that I would not have to go on the government exchange, but refused to provide written confirmation of that assurance. She also told me about someone she knew who was going to save money under the new Affordable Care Act and that if we did have to change plans, we probably would save money, too.

Well, this week we received notice from our insurance company that they could no longer provide coverage under our existing plan. Our plan does not meet some of the minimum requirements of the Affordable Care Act, among them maternity coverage, pre- and post-natal care, pediatric care and substance abuse coverage. Since my wife and I are in our sixties, we neither want nor need maternity coverage; we neither want nor need pre- and post-natal care; we have no young children, so we neither want nor need pediatric care; and we don't use drugs, so we neither want nor need substance abuse coverage. Nevertheless, we were informed by our insurance company that we must purchase health insurance that complies with the new mandate.

The new plan will cost us 33% more than our current plan. What happened to President Obama's declaration that every American family would save \$2,500.00 per year under the Affordable Care Act, for which you voted? By the way, the only way we're limiting the increase in our premium to 33% is by accepting a *\$12,000.00 annual deductible!*

Before the final vote on the Affordable Care Act, I called your office and e-mailed you, asking you not to vote for the new law because it was going to reduce Medicare funding by about \$800 billion. I was concerned about my elderly mother and her care. Your staff member to whom I spoke at the time did not know about the legislation's cut in Medicare funding. I suppose, like Nancy Pelosi and the rest of your colleagues, he hadn't taken the time to read the law.

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In today's *Norwich Bulletin* [the local newspaper in Congressman Courtney's district], an Associated Press article reported, "President Barack Obama says he'll do everything he can to help people coping with health insurance cancellations." The best thing he can do is sign legislation that allows the millions of people like us to get their old insurance back. If or when such legislation is brought before Congress, I urge you to support it.

Finally, when I was 18 years old, I registered for the draft and also registered to vote. I registered as a Democrat, a decision that wasn't very popular with my Republican parents. I couldn't help but be impressed and inspired by Robert Kennedy, however, so I was sure I made the right decision.

Last Tuesday, I went to the Woodstock Town Hall to vote in our local elections. While there, I stepped into the Registrar's office and filled out a form to change my party affiliation. As of November 5, 2013, I am a registered Republican.

It took your arrogance and indifference – and that of President Obama – to trump Robert Kennedy. I now understand and share former Texas Governor John Connally's sentiment when he changed his party affiliation from Democrat to Republican: "I didn't leave the Democratic party. The Democratic party left me."

Sincerely,

James F. Leonard  
Woodstock, Connecticut

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