

Shortly after President Obama signed the health care bill on Tuesday, a bipartisan group of 13 state elected officials, led by Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum, filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the bill's constitutionality. The lawsuit contends that Congress does not have the authority under the Constitution to require every American to purchase government-approved coverage from health insurance companies, and that under the Tenth Amendment, this power is reserved to state governments. The state officials also note that the new health care law imposes an enormous financial burden on the states, without providing the funding needed to cover the cost of these new mandates.

I have joined several other California Representatives in sending a [letter](#) to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and Attorney General Jerry Brown urging them to support the states that are challenging the law. I believe it is appropriate for the courts to review the constitutionality of this unprecedented intrusion on Americans' health freedom. While the Constitution gives Congress power to regulate interstate commerce, Congress has never before attempted to force people to purchase a particular good or service from a private business. The health insurance mandate is often compared to requirements for drivers to purchase auto insurance, but there are two crucial differences: auto insurance mandates are enforced at the state level, and citizens do not have to purchase insurance if they choose not to drive. Perhaps most troubling of all, under the new law, the IRS will be in charge of checking up on your health coverage and charging you a fine if you're not signed up for a government-approved plan. These provisions may violate the Constitution and should be thoroughly and objectively analyzed by the courts. In addition, I will continue working with other Republican members of Congress to repeal this massive new government takeover of our health care system, and replace it with solutions that actually lower health care costs without growing government and piling massive debt upon the shoulders of our children and grandchildren.