United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 5, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman, Committee on
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Orrin Hatch
Chairman, Committee on Finance
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Alexander and Hatch,

In light of reports of ongoing, secret negotiations regarding a Senate version of Trumpcare, we urge you to engage in an open and transparent debate including holding hearings on any potential legislative product so that families and communities can understand the impact on their health and financial security.

It has been nearly four months since Senate Republicans passed a budget resolution, including reconciliation instructions, intended solely to enact Trumpcare. Since that time, the Senate hasn't held a single public hearing on the reconciliation process or the impact this devastating legislation would have on patients and families. Yesterday, the House passed its version of Trumpcare, after making substantial concessions to the extreme right wing of the House Republican conference. The House acted without an updated cost or coverage estimate from the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office. The MacArthur Amendment didn't receive a single hearing, and the text of the Upton amendment was released less than 24 hours before final passage of the bill.

It is deeply concerning that legislation with such far-reaching and harmful consequences would be jammed through the House with little time for public review or debate. Trumpcare threatens protections for Americans with pre-existing conditions, imposes an "age tax," and ends the Medicaid program as we know it, all to finance tax cuts for the wealthy and major corporations.

The Senate Finance and HELP Committees cannot abdicate our responsibility to hold public hearings on such sweeping health reform legislation. Before passage of the Affordable Care Act, the Senate held a thorough, collaborative, and deliberate process. The Senate Finance Committee held more than 50 hearings and spent a full eight days marking up the legislation. A quarter of the amendments accepted by the Finance Committee were Republican amendments. The Senate HELP Committee held more than 45 bipartisan hearings, roundtables, and walkthroughs. During HELP's month-long markup, the Committee accepted 160 Republican amendments. Both Committees had their respective bills posted online for 6 days prior to each markup. In total, the

Senate spent more than 160 hours considering the legislation, which at passage, included 147 Republican amendments.

Rather than continuing to work in secret, we urge you to make good on your stated preference and long successful history of bipartisan legislating, and hold public hearings on the devastating impact of Trumpcare. Furthermore, we urge you to abandon the disastrous Trumpcare bill, stop trying to repeal the ACA and sabotaging the health care system, and work with Democrats on bipartisan legislation to make health care more affordable, expand coverage, and strengthen quality of care for patients and families.

Sincerely,

Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate HELP Committee

Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee