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The Solution for Abortion & Health Care

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Suddenly, everyone in Washington is talking about abortion and the media has pronounced the dilemma facing Democratic congressional leaders will nigh insoluble. ??No easy way out? for Democrats on abortion? is the caption of the leader at Politico.com.

Folks: Here is the easy way out. First, the background. The Stupak Amendment passed by such an overwhelming margin in large part because all summer long, some pro-choice people were saying that the Capps Amendment prevented federal funding of abortion coverage and pro-life people said it was an accounting trick. And, everyone, repeat everyone, knew that on Capps, the pro-lifers were right. Factcheck.org said that Capps did not prevent federal funding. So, last Saturday, the House leadership realized that Capps was too clever by half and was not going to fly and they allowed a vote on the Stupak Amendment. But, the Stupak Amendment went further than the language of the Hyde Amendment. In addition to banning any plans that cover abortion from the public option and from the reception of a federal subsidy, Stupak bans plans that cover abortion from the ?exchanges? being set up where individuals can go to shop for insurance, even if the person doing the shopping is not receiving a federal subsidy.

Here is the solution. Roll back that last provision. If a woman, with her own money, wants to buy a plan that covers abortion services, she should be free to do so. Period. But, if someone is getting a federal subsidy for their private plan, or participating in the public option, then they cannot buy a plan that covers abortion, although they can buy an insurance policy rider with their own money if they wish to do so. So, we do not go back to the game-playing subterfuge of the Capps Amendment, and we remove the section of the Stupak language that goes beyond the Hyde Amendment?s ban on the use of federal funds. That is the way out.

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