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ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

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### Opening Statement

**Rep. Matt Cartwright, Subcommittee Ranking Member**

### **Subcommittees on Energy Policy, Health Care and Entitlements and on Economic Growth, Job Creation, and Regulatory Affairs**

### ***Joint Hearing on "Health Insurance Co-ops: Examining ObamaCare's \$2 Billion Loan Gamble"***

**February 5, 2014**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I thank the witnesses for appearing here today.

This hearing will examine the loan program established under the Affordable Care Act to create non-profit, member focused, health insurance CO-OPs, or Consumer Operated and Oriented Plans, in several states.

The CO-OP program is an investment in health care innovation. It is an investment designed to increase market competition and consumer choice, which drives down prices to consumers, something that we should all want more of.

I had looked forward to the testimony of Sara Horowitz, the CEO of a sponsor of three CO-OPs, and a winner of the MacArthur genius award for social innovation. Thank you for coming today.

I had also looked forward to the testimony of Dr. Jan VanRiper, the Executive Director of the National Alliance of State Health CO-OPs, to give us a big picture view of the 23 successful CO-OPs operating today in both Red and Blue states.

However, I will not be hearing their testimony today.

The Majority released a 28 page report they have written on the CO-OPs exactly 1 hour before this hearing was supposed to start. No Democrats had seen this report before its release.

The American public wants us to work together.  
They are clamoring for us to work together.  
This is not working together.

And this is no accident. 28 pages! I'm sure it is very well researched! It's been proofread and formatted! This is the kind of thing that takes weeks to put together! There was no reason to wait until an hour before this hearing to drop this report on us, except to catch us flat footed.

And sadly this isn't the first time this has happened—it has become the standard operating procedure for the Republicans on this committee.

Republicans and Democrats alike are constantly talking about how they want to work with folks on the other side of the aisle.

I would say to my colleagues, if you want to work with us, we're here. You have our emails and phone numbers, and we work just down the hall from each other in the same office buildings. Send us the report, we'll be happy to take a look at it, and then we can sit down with you and have a civil, informed discussion.

But I can't sit through a hearing where we are going to talk about a report that none of the Democrats have had the chance to read, and pretend that this is the way we should be doing things in Congress.

The American public wants us to cooperate.  
This is not what I came to Congress for.

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