

Humphrey School of Public Affairs

Making Insurers Accountable: The Case for a Public Option in Health Reform

Democrats in Washington are making steady progress in assembling the most significant health reform in four decades. Despite charges of a government takeover, Lois Quam argues that Democratic proposals will stabilize employer sponsored health insurance and expand the opportunity for millions of previously uninsured Americans to purchase private health insurance. In this private sector approach, the insurers will need to be checked and held accountable.

Ms. Quam drew on her experience in the private sector and in private insurance to explain the importance of providing the option of government insurance in order to control costs and ensure quality.



LOIS QUAM

Lois Quam is an internationally recognized leader on the emerging green economy and health care. She is the founder and CEO of Tysvar, LLC, a business incubator and strategic advisory firm focused on the new green economy and health care, and a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress. Lois has appeared in Tom Friedman's recent book, *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, and was named by *Fortune* magazine as one of the 50 most

powerful women in American business. From 2007 to 2009, Lois was leader of strategic investments at Piper Jaffray, a Minneapolis-based global investment bank, where she focused on investment opportunities in clean technology and renewable energy. Prior to joining Piper, Quam served as President and CEO of the \$30 billion Public and Senior Markets Segment at UnitedHealth Group, serving the health needs of more than 10 million older and low income Americans. She is a graduate of Macalester College and attended Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. Quam currently serves on the Boards of General Mills, Macalester College, the University of Minnesota Foundation and the National Wildlife Federation.

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