

STATEMENT FROM REID SPOKESMAN ON HEALTH REFORM TRANSPARENCY Washington, DC—
Spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, Jim Manley, released the following statement today regarding the transparent process undertaken by Senate Democrats to lead passage of The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act through the Senate last month: “Senator Reid appreciates C-SPAN’s commitment to ensuring transparency and we will continue to fully comply with the longstanding precedents of open access to the work of Congress. “The drafting of this health insurance reform bill has set new standards for transparency. As the C-SPAN letter states, there have been ‘literally hundreds of hours of committee hearings, mark ups and floor debate on these bills’ – and every one of those hours was broadcast across the country. “The HELP Committee held a televised markup that lasted more than 13 days, and in which it accepted 161 Republican amendments. The Finance Committee then marked up their bill for eight days – the longest in 22 years – and each of those meetings was similarly broadcast. The Committee posted the Chairman’s mark of the bill online six days earlier. The full text of the substitute amendment and the Congressional Budget Office’s assessment were both available online for weeks. “But what should truly concern the American people is the Republicans’ shamelessly transparent strategy of relying on misinformation and myths to stop reform at all costs. Their ploys are broadcast on C-SPAN for all of America to see, as much of it happens on the Senate floor. For example, at the beginning of the floor debate Senator Reid asked consent from Senate Republicans to file all amendments well in advance and post them on the Internet, but the Republican Leadership refused this request. During consideration of the Sanders amendment, Republicans publicly made clear they would use procedural games to turn ‘transparency’ into a tactic of delay and obstruction. “Just as our health reform bill will create a more open health insurance system – transparency that will save lives and money and stop insurance company abuses – we are committed to transparency in the legislative process. We will continue to ensure that the Congress and the public will have ample opportunity to evaluate the bill before it moves to final passage.”

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