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Public Plan Must Be an Option

GEORGE WILL'S COLUMN of June 21 dissected President Obama's reasons for wanting Americans to have a public health-plan choice, but he ignored the polls that show an overwhelming majority of citizens — 75 percent or more — want a public option as part of health-care reform. Their reasons are straightforward. People believe a public-plan option will give individuals, families and small businesses a meaningful additional choice, along with private insurance plans, to meet their health-care needs for an affordable price.

A public plan won't have special rules or money to give it an advantage over private insurance; it will simply provide new competition to private insurance plans on value and service for the dollar. It will have lower administrative costs because it will not be trying to make a big profit on our

medical needs. Most experts think that if we don't have a public-plan option, nothing will reduce the health-care costs that threaten to bankrupt not only families but the whole country.

Since it would not be employer-based, a public plan will also provide a stable, portable option for individuals when they change jobs.

Under health-care reform, no one should be forced out of their current insurance coverage if they are happy with it. But everyone should have more choices to meet their individual or family needs, including the right to choose a public plan under fair rules of the road.

NICK ESTES

Health policy analyst, NM
Voices for Children

Albuquerque