

Let C-SPAN cover health care deliberations

As reported in a recent editorial in the Daily News, "So much for transparency in Congress," on Saturday, the head of C-SPAN has asked to televise our elected representatives as they attempt to hash out the differences between the House and Senate versions of the health care reform bill.

This is a very reasonable request that will no doubt be turned down. Congress, it seems, is just not that interested in providing the American people with a front row seat that would allow everyone to see firsthand how they really operate.

As you will recall, it was about a year ago that President Barack Obama, during his inaugural address, spoke passionately about the need for greater transparency in government. Well, here is the perfect opportunity to act on that promise.

And he is in an ideal position to make that happen. Officials from his administration will be participating in the process of merging the two versions of the health care bill. Obama should simply insist that the deliberations be televised.

I also realize that if you have ever watched C-SPAN, then you already know that the programming it carries is not very electrifying. Then again, it was never designed to be entertainment.

We are talking about the creation of a new health care system that will affect every citizen in the country. Why the need for secrecy and backroom politics? Why don't our elected officials want us to be privy to their negotiations as they draft a final version of the bill?

These are important questions that get at the heart of what it means to live in a democracy.

The American people have a right to know how our government conducts business. The president and Congress should make transparency a reality by permitting C-SPAN to televise their deliberations.

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