

Gary L. Bauer, President

KEY CONCERNS & QUESTIONS ABOUT HEALTHCARE REFORM

The current healthcare proposals being pushed in Congress and by the White House are deeply flawed and will undermine the strength of our current system, while driving us toward European-style socialism. This is the time for all concerned citizens to speak up and insist on answers from your elected officials. Below are ten concerns and questions you can raise with your representative and senators at town hall meetings, in letters or phone calls. For more information, contact *American Values* at 703-671-9700 or visit us online at www.ouramericanvalues.org.

1. ABORTION

Pro-choice groups, like NARAL and Planned Parenthood, are demanding that abortion be covered in any healthcare reform bill. In a recent interview with *Politico*, Laurie Rubiner, vice president for public policy and advocacy at Planned Parenthood, defends this demand by saying, “the alternative would be slashing benefits for millions of women who currently have [private] coverage for abortions...” Key administration officials refuse to rule out abortion coverage. When asked on *Fox News Sunday* whether taxpayer money would go to pay for abortions, White House Budget Director Peter Orszag replied, “I am not prepared to say explicitly that right now. It’s obviously a controversial issue, and it’s one of the questions that is playing out in this debate.”

Pro-life senators on the Senate’s Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee forced a roll call vote on the issue when Senator Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) attempted to add an amendment to the healthcare bill that would, in her words, “include women’s health clinics that provide comprehensive services ... deemed medically necessary or appropriate.” She admitted that such “health clinics” would include Planned Parenthood. The pro-life amendment to prohibit funding of abortion lost 11-to-12.

Question for your Congressmen: Will you oppose any healthcare reform bill that uses my tax dollars to pay for abortions?

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2. EUTHANASIA

In a recent *New York Post* column, Betsy McCaughey, a health care expert and former lieutenant governor of New York, wrote:

“One troubling provision of the House bill compels seniors to submit to a counseling session every five years (and more often if they become sick or go into a nursing home) about alternatives for end-of-life care (House bill, p. 425-430). The sessions cover highly sensitive matters such as whether to receive antibiotics and ‘the use of artificially administered nutrition and hydration.’ This mandate invites abuse, and seniors could easily be pushed to refuse care.”

Question for your Congressmen: Will you oppose any healthcare reform bill that in any way promotes euthanasia?

3. COST

The United States faces a debt crisis. According to many analysts, including Senator Judd Gregg (who is so respected by President Obama that he offered Gregg the post of Secretary of Commerce), the Obama budget will give us \$11 trillion of debt at the end of five years and \$17 trillion of debt at the end of ten years.

(Source: PolitiFact.com)

Question for your Congressmen: Why is Congress and the president pushing through a healthcare bill that would cost another trillion dollars over the next ten years? Shouldn't we concentrate on getting the debt under control first?

4. RATIONING CARE

According to a July 15th report by *The Hill*, “The House bill would be paid for by roughly \$500 billion in Medicare and Medicaid cuts...” These “cuts” would come as millions of Americans are retiring. Logic suggests that if we are “cutting” hundreds of billions of dollars, healthcare would have to be limited or rationed in some way to accommodate more people. And seniors would be most affected by Medicare cuts.

In addition, advisors to President Obama, such as Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, brother of White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, have suggested that healthcare should be rationed. Dr. Emanuel once wrote that “services provided to individuals who are irreversibly prevented from being or becoming participating citizens ... should not be

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guaranteed. An obvious example is not guaranteeing health services to patients with dementia.”

(Source: http://www.ncpa.org/pdfs/Where_Civic_Republicanism_and_Deliberative_Democracy_Meet.pdf)

Question for your Congressmen: How can government promise to do more with less? Will you oppose any healthcare reform bill that in any way limits my access to healthcare or medicines recommended by my doctor?

5. MORE BURDENS ON SMALL BUSINESSES

Despite a 9.5% (and rising) unemployment rate, the healthcare bill in the House imposes a new 8% payroll tax on small businesses with payrolls of \$400,000 or more that don't provide health insurance for their employees. This is in addition to the current 15% payroll tax. What this means is that any employer with a payroll of \$400,000 dollars or higher will have to pay at least 25% above the salary just to hire someone. Common sense tells you that any struggling small business will likely lay off workers to avoid this additional tax. On the other hand, if the tax is cheaper than the cost of health insurance, larger businesses may opt to cancel their health insurance and simply pay the 8% fine, thus forcing employees into the government's "public option,"

(Source: Wall Street Journal, July 15, 2009)

Question for your Congressmen: Why are you imposing additional mandates and taxes on small businesses, which create the overwhelming majority of new jobs, in the middle of a severe recession?

6. QUALITY CARE

American healthcare is generally better than healthcare in European countries with socialized medicine. The German breast cancer mortality rate is 52% higher than in the United States. Prostate cancer mortality is 604% higher in the United Kingdom and 457% higher in Norway than in the United States. Canadian healthcare lags behind the United States too. Canadian patients wait twice as long to see a specialist for hip surgery or cancer than we do in the United States. Most Americans say they are satisfied with the U.S. health care system, but more than 70% of Germans, Canadians, Australians, New Zealanders and Britons say that their systems need "fundamental change" or "complete rebuilding."

(Source: National Center for Policy Analysis.)

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In an editorial on July 26th, the *Washington Post* criticized President Obama for not “leveling about the consequences of change” when it comes to healthcare costs versus quality. Here’s what the *Post* wrote: “The Congressional Budget Office estimates that new technology accounts for about half the increase in health-care costs over the past several decades. This, for the most part, is a good thing. Adjusted for inflation, health-care spending per person is six times what it was 40 years ago. But no one today would settle for 1960s-style medicine.”

Question for your Congressmen: Why are you trying to force us in the direction of more government involvement in healthcare when everywhere government-run healthcare has been tried, quality declines and care is rationed?

7. THE PEOPLE ARE BEING IGNORED

According to a recent poll, just 23% of voters believe healthcare reform legislation will lower costs, while 53% believe it will lead to more expensive care. By a margin of 50% to 23%, voters believe that “reform” legislation will make the quality of care decline. And while voters believe they will get worse care at higher costs, 78% also believe that healthcare reform will result in middle class tax hikes. In addition, a recent Fox News poll found that 91% of those surveyed have health insurance, 84% said that the quality of their health insurance was either excellent or good and 83% said the quality of health care they receive from their private insurance is either good or excellent. And only 12% of those surveyed said reforming health care was the most important issue Congress should be working on right now.

(Source: Rasmussen Reports, July 28, 2009 and Fox News poll July 23, 2009.)

Question for your Congressmen: Why are you and the White House rushing this bill through Congress and ignoring the concerns of the American people?

8. LOSS OF FREEDOM

The healthcare reform legislation under consideration in the House will eventually force all Americans into a government-approved plan. After a five-year grace period, every new insurance policy will have to comply with government mandates, and any policy changes – “altering co-pays, deductibles, or even switching coverage for this or that drug” – invalidates your previous coverage and forces you to choose a government “qualified” plan. In addition, the House plan mandates coverage for

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every individual. If you are self-employed or choose not buy insurance for whatever reason, the bill imposes a “healthcare tax” of 2.5% of your income.

(Source: CNNMoney.com, July 24, 2009 and Bloomberg.com, July 15, 2009)

Question for your Congressmen: Why do you believe bureaucrats should decide what kind of health insurance I should have? And will you guarantee that any healthcare reform bill passed by Congress will always allow me to choose my own doctor?

9. RACIAL PREFERENCES

Do you care about the race of a doctor who is getting ready to operate on you? Of course not. Most Americans want their doctor to be the best professional available regardless of race or ethnic background. But congressional liberals have a different idea. On page 909 of the House bill, grants to medical schools will be awarded “to entities that have a demonstrated record of the following ... training individuals who are from underrepresented minority groups or disadvantaged backgrounds.”

(Source: Investors Business Daily, July 27, 2009)

Question for your Congressmen: Why are you throwing affirmative action into a healthcare reform bill?

10. PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

President Obama has repeatedly said that “no insurance company will be allowed to deny you coverage because of a pre-existing medical condition.” That sounds wonderful until you apply common sense, which is in short supply in Washington. What if we made a law that allowed you to buy car insurance after you got into an accident and that required the insurance company to pay for the damage? Wouldn't many people just wait for an accident before buying insurance? Why wouldn't many Americans wait until they were sick to buy health insurance?

Question for your Congressmen: Isn't it clear that this provision would drive up the cost of health insurance for everyone?