



## **Talking Points: Health Insurance Reform**

### **“Government-Run” Health Care/Socialized Medicine:**

- **President Obama has consistently said that if you like the plan or the doctor that you have, you will be able to keep it.**
- President Obama will support a uniquely American approach to health insurance reform that builds on the existing employer-based system, but he also supports providing Americans a public health insurance option that would operate alongside the private plans.
- This would provide a better range of choices, make the health insurance market more competitive, and keep insurance companies honest.
- **President Obama’s proposal would provide Americans with a choice:**
  - If Americans like the health insurance they currently have, they don’t have to change their coverage, and can stay with the same doctor. But the cost for that care should be lowered to be less burdensome for families.
  - If Americans currently don’t have health insurance, or are highly unsatisfied with their current coverage, the reform President Obama supports will provide Americans with choices; including a public option to ensure all American’s have access to quality, affordable health insurance.

### **Paying For Reform:**

- Unless we act, within a decade, one out of every five dollars we earn will be spent on health care.
- Eventually, the amount our government spends on Medicare and Medicaid will eventually grow larger than what we spend on *everything else combined*.
- Health insurance reform is the single most important thing we can do for America’s long term fiscal health.
- **Covering more Americans will not be cheap, but President Obama has promised that reform will not add to our deficits over the next decade, and will reduce costs over the long term.**
- The President has identified hundreds of billions of dollars in savings and efficiencies. This is money that’s already in our health system that can be redeployed to pay about two-thirds of reform.
- The remaining third will be paid for by raising revenue. How best to do that is one of the things under debate in Congress right now. (The President has suggested modestly limiting the tax deductions taken by the wealthiest Americans to the same level it was at the end of the Reagan Administration.)
- The Obama Administration has also forged a coalition that simply hasn’t existed before: hospitals, doctors, nurses and pharmaceutical companies



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agree that the status quo is unsustainable, and have committed to doing their part to bring down costs.

### **Republican Party and Allied Groups' Mob Rule**

- After losing two consecutive elections and every major policy fight on Capitol Hill, Republicans and their allied groups are inciting mobs of angry right wing extremists - funded by special interest lobbyists - to disrupt thoughtful discussions about health insurance reform taking place in Congressional Districts across the country.
- There is a precedent for this kind of behavior in the Republican Party – we saw similar activity at McCain-Palin rallies last year, where crowds were baited with cries of “socialist,” “communist,” and the “birthers” movement was born.
- These mobs of extremists were not interested then – and are not interested now – in having a thoughtful discussion about the issues.
- Instead, they are interested – as many Republican leaders have said – in ‘breaking’ President Obama and destroying his Presidency.
- **Despite the headline grabbing nature of these angry mobs, they are not reflective of where the overwhelming majority of the American people are on the issues.**
- Right now, there are hundreds of thousands of thoughtful discussions taking place around kitchen tables, water coolers and in homes across the country.
- OFA is focused on promoting these kinds of discussions about the issues and mobilizing support for urgently needed reform.

### **Abortion:**

- **Opponents of health reform are trying to set this up as a straw man. No one is advocating that Congress mandate abortion coverage.**
- The President’s position is that we should continue current practice: there is a prohibition on federally funds from being used for abortion through the federal program Medicaid.
- Similarly, insurance plans that individuals purchase, choosing one that suits their family’s needs, will continue to determine whether they offer coverage for abortion services.  
With respect to the public option, the President does not believe Congress should dictate specific medical procedures, medicines, or treatments. Those specific coverage decisions are better left to those with expertise.

### **Immigration:**

- Undocumented immigrants will not be included in any type of health reform, but the President understands our immigration system is broken, needs to be fixed, and supports comprehensive immigration reform.