



Fact Check: Responding to Opponents of Health Insurance Reform

Democratic Senators continue to respond to rumors and wild misrepresentations about the health insurance reform legislation. Below are three misrepresentations about health insurance reform legislation that circulated last week.

MISREPRESENTATION ONE: Health Insurance Reform Guts Medicare.

FACT CHECK: Absolutely False - Health Insurance Reform Legislation DOES NOT Cut ANY Benefits for Seniors.

- ✓ **Senate health insurance reform legislation refocuses Medicare funds on senior's health, not insurance companies' wealth.** The health insurance reform legislation doesn't cut any benefits for America's seniors – it expands them. It gives every Medicare recipient at least one free, yearly physical with a primary care provider, which would include a personalized health improvement plan and information about Medicare-covered and recommended preventive screenings. The legislation will also make those preventive services recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force FREE for Medicare beneficiaries - things like mammograms, vaccinations, and other preventive services and screenings. [Chairman's Mark, Senate Finance Committee, [9/16/09](#)]

MISREPRESENTATION TWO: Health Insurance Reform Represents Government Takeover and Control.

FACT CHECK: Absolutely False - A Government Takeover of Health Care is Not an Option.

- ✓ **Senate Health Reform Legislation DOES NOT Include Any Government Takeover.** There is no government takeover or control of health care in any senate health insurance reform legislation. In fact, in the recently released Senate Finance Committee Chairman's Mark, there is no government-run program. All the health insurance exchanges, which will create choice and competition for Americans' business in health care, are run by states. The proposed co-ops are non-profit organizations and not run by the federal government. There is no government control or takeover of health care. [Chairman's Mark, Senate Finance Committee, [9/16/09](#)]
- ✓ **A Government Takeover of Health Care is Not an Option.** Senate Republicans assert that a public option will lead to a government takeover of health care – that's simply not true. As the Los Angeles Times noted, "The Obama administration's senior healthcare official Wednesday flatly rejected the idea of taking over the nation's medical insurance system, saying the federal government did not want to assume management of healthcare coverage. Kathleen Sebelius, in her first appearance before Congress since being confirmed as the secretary of Health and Human Services, said the administration wanted a 'public plan option' to encourage competition. It does not want to create a monopoly." [Los Angeles Times, [5/7/09](#)]

MISREPRESENTATION THREE: Health Insurance Reform Has Been Rushed.

FACT CHECK: Absolutely False - Senators Have Spent the Past Year Considering Legislation.

- ✓ **HELP Committee Held Bipartisan Roundtables, Hearings, Walkthroughs.** In 2008 and 2009, the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee held 14 bipartisan roundtables, 13 bipartisan Committee hearings, and 20 bipartisan walkthroughs to consider health care reform. [Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee]

- **HELP Committee Spent 13 Days Marking Up Health Reform Legislation.** During June and July of this year, the HELP Committee spent 13 days and more than 56 hours marking up the Affordable Health Choices Act. [Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee]
- **HELP Committee Considered Nearly 300 Amendments to the Health Reform Legislation.** During the markup, the Committee considered nearly 300 amendments and accepted more than 160 Republican amendments to the bill. [Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee]
- ✓ **Senate Finance Has Had Over 50 Meetings on Health Reform Legislation.** Since November 2008, the Senate Finance Committee has held thirteen member meetings and walkthroughs on health reform legislation and held thirty-eight meetings and negotiations with at least six members of the committee on the health reform legislation. That's fifty-three meetings on health reform legislation. [Senate Finance Committee]
- **Since May 2008, Senate Finance Has Held 17 Roundtables, Summits and Hearings on the Health Insurance Legislation.** Senate Finance Committee has held a summit, roundtables and hearings on reforming health insurance and health care beginning in May 2008. [Senate Finance Committee]