

## Highlight of Recent Activities June 17, 2009

In the last few weeks, Doctors for America has made substantial progress in building support for health reform legislation in 2009. The organization's efforts have focused on several areas: physician engagement, building support in the non-physician community, media outreach, and partnerships with Congress and the administration.

### Working with Doctors

#### *Educating physicians about key topics in health reform*

Doctors for America has been organizing educational webcasts for physicians across the country and developing educational materials to help physicians understand key issues in health reform. Our most recent webcast was with Governor Howard Dean. These webcasts and materials can be found on the Doctors for America website.



### Building National Grassroots Capacity



As the health reform battle becomes more heated, we have continued to build a national grassroots infrastructure. We are identifying physicians in communities across America to recruit other physicians, serve as institutional point people, and serve as state and regional leaders.

*Giving Physicians a Voice in Washington*

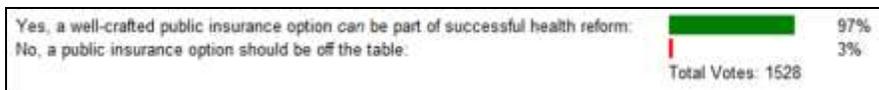
On Thursday, June 18, leaders of Doctors for America will be attending the White House Stakeholders Meeting on prevention and wellness. We are soliciting comments and ideas from our members to bring to the White House.



**Reframing the perception of physician support for reform**

*Understanding What Physicians Think*

Doctors for America listens to physicians across America and collects information on what physicians think about the issues. For example, after the American Medical Association released a firm statement against the public insurance option and then backtracked hours later, Doctors for America launched a 48-hour survey. Over 1,500 respondents from 49 states overwhelmingly supported a public insurance option by a margin of 97% to 3%.



At the same time, we collected supporting stories and comments from hundreds of physicians to help the public and Congress understand what physicians truly think.

Because we've collected this data, we are able to state to the media that "When asked directly, physicians support a public option."

**Speak for yourself!**

Do you think a public insurance option should be considered as part of reform?

YES, a well-crafted public insurance option can be part of successful health reform

NO, a public insurance option should be off the table

Your Thoughts (optional):

I am a:  Doctor  Medical Student

First name:  Last name:

ZIP Code:  E-mail:

Degree(s):  Specialty:

[Share on Facebook](#)

*Providing a Counterbalance to Organized Medicine*



**NY Times Letter to the Editor, June 17, 2009**

*To the Editor:*

*We agree that our nation's health care system, which rewards physicians for the volume of services and not quality of care, fails to promote best practices for physicians. And while we also agree that to reform the health care system physicians must be brought into the process, we are disappointed by your implication that the American Medical Association speaks for the majority of physicians. It does not.*

*Less than 20 percent of practicing American physicians are members of the A.M.A., and most members are not engaged in the organization's political activities. At the same time, there are numerous other physician organizations and specialty societies, including our own, Doctors for America, that support health care reform that will provide access to affordable health care, eliminate unnecessary testing and reward quality care. There are thousands of physicians who do not need to be persuaded by the president — because we already agree with him.*

*Rahul Rajkumar  
Nikhil Wagle  
Boston, June 14, 2009*

Dr. Zaneb Beams, a pediatrician and deputy field director of Doctors for America, was filmed for a segment of the Jim Lehrer Newshour regarding physician views on reform.



The screenshot shows the 'the Online NewsHour' website. The header includes the logo and 'FUNDING IN PART BY Chevron'. Navigation tabs include 'BROWSE BY', 'REGION', 'TOPIC', 'RECENT PROGRAMS', 'LOCAL TV LISTINGS', 'SUBSCRIPTIONS', and 'TEACHER RESO'. The main content area shows a transcript for a report titled 'Doctors Consider Health Care Possibilities as White House Pushes Reform', originally aired on June 15, 2009. The transcript text reads: 'As the health care reform debate heats up on Capitol Hill, health correspondent Betty Ann Bowser speaks with doctors about the pros and cons of a government-funded public plan and other possible changes to the current system.' Below the text is a video player with 'Download' and 'Streaming Video' options. A small image shows a doctor examining a child. The transcript continues with a quote from Jim Lehrer: 'But now, the Obama health reform pitch to doctors. NewsHour correspondent Betty Ann Bowser reports for our Health Unit, a partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.' and a paragraph about Betty Ann Bowser's report on a group of skeptical doctors from the American Medical Association.

*More Press Coverage*

**CNN (Doctors for America discussed by Paul Begala)** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UESSNvzHiS8>

<http://firstread.msnbc.msn.com/archive/2009/06/11/1962409.aspx>

<http://www.seiu.org/2009/06/president-obama-addresses-the-ama-doctors-say-public-health-insurance-option-must-be-part-of-health.php>

<http://www.nwprogressive.org/weblog/2009/06/american-doctors-support-public-option.html>

<http://thinkprogress.org/2009/06/16/wallace-misrepresents-doctors/>

<http://blog.healthcareforamericanow.org/2009/06/15/the-ama-doesnt-represent-doctors/>

[http://www.americanprogressaction.org/pressroom/2009/06/ama\\_dfa.html](http://www.americanprogressaction.org/pressroom/2009/06/ama_dfa.html)

<http://politicalaffairs.net/article/articleview/8670/>

## Working with Congress

### House Meetings on Payment Reform, June 1-4

Doctors for America members hosted 25 house meetings across the country to gather physicians to answer questions posed by the offices of Senators Max Baucus and Jeff Bingaman from the Senate Finance Committee.

Connecting Congress with practicing physicians:



Senator Max Baucus



Senator Jeff Bingaman



Host: Dr. La Tanya Hines in Los Angeles, CA



Host: Dr. Zahid Imran of Baton Rouge, LA

## Other Activities with Congress

### *House of Representatives*

We presented Doctors for America and our Voices of Physicians campaign at the Tri-Committee meeting of the House of Representatives as to the press secretaries of the House Democratic Caucus. We have received strong interest from these parties in working together to build support for health reform in Congressional districts. We are in the process of organizing in-district events with various members of Congress.



[www.drsforamerica.org](http://www.drsforamerica.org)

### *Senate*

Local Doctors for America members stood with Senator Dodd and the Senate HELP Committee at a press conference kicking off the markup of the bill.



### **Working with the Public**

#### *Organizing for America*

In preparation for national Healthcare Kickoff Events on June 6, Doctors for America helped educate house meeting hosts on the details of health reform.



*“I have gotten nothing but effusive praise from all our Regional and State folks about your various performances on the conference calls over the last few nights. Thanks so much!”*

*– National Leadership, Organizing for America*

#### *A Message from a Patient*

Dear Doctors for America,

I am not involved in the medical field. I am, however, one of the millions of patients who depend on your services. I believe that your organization's mission will help lead us back to the spirit and intent of the Hippocratic Oath....that of providing health care to the masses. . . .Thank you for your vision and inspiration.

Sincerely, Gary Chinn  
(June 15, 2009)

### **For more information, please contact:**

Vivek Murthy, MD, MBA. President, Doctors for America. [vivek.murthy@drsforamerica.org](mailto:vivek.murthy@drsforamerica.org)

Alice Chen, MD. Executive Director, Doctors for America. [alice.chen@drsforamerica.org](mailto:alice.chen@drsforamerica.org)