

October 29, 2009

Dear Doctors for America member,

This has been a big week for health reform. After months of work, the House finally released a full Reform Bill for consideration. At the same time, the Senate moved to unveil a bill next week that, surprisingly, contains a public option. As reform efforts try to build momentum from these events in Washington more of you have begun to write, to email, to talk in public, and to talk to others about reform, which you can read about below.

We'd like to know if these updates are useful to you. We put together a very short, two minute survey that we'd love for you to fill out. The [survey is here](#). We'll put the link at the bottom of this update as well.

Physicians Making A Difference:

Highlights from the last week

- Dr. Renaisa Anthony (DC), Dr. Alex Blum (NY), Dr. Rebekah Gee (LA), Dr. Nilesh Kalyanaraman (DC) and Dr. Vivek Murthy (MA) testified at a special hearing on Capitol Hill about the public option. You can read their [testimony](#) on our site.
- Dr. Boyd Shook (OK) taped a panel discussion on health reform on the Oklahoma Forum show that will be broadcast on PBS's OETA station, next Sunday at 1pm.
- Dr. Don Nguyen (OH) and Dr. Gary LeRoy (OH) held a Health Care Reform Forum at the AME Church in Dayton, OH and were invited to do an encore forum at another church.
- Dr. Rachel Friedman (CA) and Dr. Veronica Jordan (CA) continued their extraordinary efforts in Northern California, by organizing a party at which participants made almost 100 calls in 90 minutes in support of reform. Have a look [here](#) and [here](#).
- Medical student Carol Duh (TN) was featured in an article in the [Knoxville Journal](#).
- Dr. Nancy Babbit (SD) published an [op-ed](#) in a number of daily papers including the Mitchell Republic.
- Dr. Robyn Liu (KS) published an [op-ed](#) online on Forward Kansas which will be printed Sunday in the Wichita Eagle.
- Dr. Delaney Ruston (WA) produced a [raucous video](#) about parents and health reform.
- Dr. Jocelyn Annemarie Rapelyea (DC) and Dr. Christine Brown Teal (DC) participated in a health reform and women's health [event at the White House](#) with Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden as part of Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Key Policy Developments

1. House Reform Bill Unveiled

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi announced the release of the House Health Reform Bill this morning which will expand insurance coverage to an additional 36 million Americans while reducing the deficit by an estimated \$30 billion over the next 10 years. The bill includes a national public insurance option, which will negotiate payment rates with providers in the way private insurers do. This insurance plan would be available alongside private plans in a new insurance exchange, open to individuals without access to employer-sponsored insurance as well as small businesses. This exchange, along with an expansion of Medicaid and subsidies to moderate-income Americans are key elements contributing to expanded coverage. The bill would require everyone to sign up by 2013 for insurance through their employer, a government program or through a plan offered in the exchange.

In addition, the bill seeks to end insurance company practices such as coverage denial based on preexisting conditions, rescissions, and caps on allowed care. The bill also includes provisions to improve public health, develop the provider workforce, invest in comparative effectiveness research, support primary and mental care, and promote prevention and wellness. Provisions previously included in the bill to reform Medicare's Sustainable Growth Rate will be introduced in the House today in a separate, stand alone bill.

The reform bill, released just this morning, will be [available online](#) for 72 hours before action is taken in the House.

2. Senate Bill to Include Public Option

On Monday, Senate majority leader Harry Reid announced that the combined Senate Bill, not yet publicly unveiled, would include a government-run insurance plan. The proposed insurance plan would be national, but states would be allowed to "opt out" from participating. The plan is included in a set of proposals Sen. Reid has



Top 3 Stories

- Washington Post - [House Health-Care Reform Bill Includes Public Option](#)
- Associated Press - [Rising Concerns over Coverage Loss](#)
- NY Times (Paul Krugman) - [After Reform Passes](#)

What you can do this week

Post or Share this Flyer

Help us make sure that legislators, doctors, and the public know about the benefits health reform would bring rural communities. Post or share a [flyer](#) about rural health or learn more from our [info sheet](#) on rural health.

Also, White House Senior Advisor Valerie Jarrett will holding an extended online chat on Monday, Nov. 2 at 3:30pm EST to discuss minority health and the impact of reform. For details and to submit questions go [here](#).

Take a Two Minute Survey

Let us know how we're doing. Please take two minutes to answer our five question survey. Your feedback will make these updates and our efforts for all of our 15,000 members across the country.

Access the two minute survey [here](#).

Thank you again for your feedback. To give us a sense of how you feel about these updates, please answer our short [survey](#). Remember, you can share this newsletter via [facebook](#), [twitter](#), or [linkedIn](#). You can also download this newsletter as a [PDF](#) or listen to it via [iTunes](#).

Sincerely,

Milan de Vries and the Doctors for America Team

submitted to the Congressional Budget Office for cost analysis. The inclusion of a public option came as a surprise to many observers. To pass, a bill including a public option would first require 60 votes on a procedural vote followed by the support of 50 Senators on a final vote. The public option is still opposed by a handful of Senators in the Democratic caucus, whose support Sen. Reid would need to ensure passage of the bill.

The full Senate bill is expected to be released sometime next week.

3. Report Released on Rural Health

The Department of Health and Human Services released a report this week about the impact reform would have on rural care. The report notes that rural areas across the country face particular health challenges including higher rates of poverty, chronic disease and uninsurance. The report notes impacts that health reform would have on health disparities in rural areas. In particular, proposed reform would invest in the National Health Service Corps, offer loan repayments for primary care providers and general surgeons working in underserved areas, and provide support for both rural hospitals and community clinics.

The full report is available [here](#).