

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM THIRD RAIL EVENT (Answers to these questions will be posted soon)

- We have community hospitals where anyone can receive care. We have clinics where anyone can receive free immunizations and some health care. I have friends who have received expensive medicines for free from the pharmaceutical companies because their insurance did not cover what they needed. 85% of Americans are insured. I fear that no private company can compete with a company that not only doesn't have to make a profit, but also can print its own money. No system can give unlimited care to all people. Choices will always have to be made, but I don't want a group of unelected people forcing their choices, that I may find immoral, on me. I am extremely uncomfortable with a single-payer, government run health care system for all of those reasons. Has anyone proposed any legislation that would make it possible for non-profit health insurance companies to form sort of in the same way that credit unions formed for people to whom banks did not want to loan money?
- What role do you believe the Federal School Lunch Program has on early onset diabetes and the epidemic of childhood obesity?
- Why isn't the question of tort reform a larger part of the health care reform debate? It seems like lowering costs via tort reform and its impact on reducing law suits and tests conducted for the purpose of protecting doctors from suits would make a big impact on overall health care quality and lower costs.
- I shop for my own healthcare because I have catastrophic healthcare coverage. I pay my own way up to \$10K. Next week, my daughter's tonsils are being removed. I shopped price and haggled. The hospital next door to the doctor's office wanted \$2,800 for the operating room. The clinic next door to the doctor's office wanted \$800. Her doc operates at both facilities. Guess which way I went? Same quality. Same standards. Different overhead and margins.
- Based on what you know of ARRA Stimulus funding, etc., are current plans sufficient to produce the health information Highway that has been discussed?
- Since defensive medicine has a significant impact on cost, what recommendations would you make to ease that particular cost?
- When insurance companies have led the way on reducing health care costs, one strategy they have employed is the denial of pre-existing conditions and another and even more ethically shocking strategy is rescission of care often based on confusing and convoluted insurance application forms. Insurance companies, when asked by the Energy and Commerce Committee this summer if they would stop rescission, in turn said they wouldn't because rescission is not illegal in most states they operate. Clearly, there is a need for federal government intervention, at some level, when companies have at least with these two strategies leaned on denying care to reduce costs. What type of interventions (if any) do you each support?
- How much of the cost of health care is due to a shortage of doctors and nurses? Or is this not a major factor?
- Every day we are seeing the curtain pulled back on the manner in which our food supply is processed. With each news story, we gain insight on the damage this system is doing to our health. In what form should nutrition assessment and education take under current health reform? Should nutrition counseling be a guaranteed benefit for all health insurance policies?