

# {CAMPUS★PROGRESS}

## **Affordable & Quality Health Care for All**

*“Health care reform cannot wait, it must not wait, and it will not wait another year.”– President Barack Obama*

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### **Summary:**

The United States currently spends \$2.3 trillion dollars on health care, yet we are one of the unhealthiest developed nations in the world, with 46 million Americans lacking health care coverage. Our health care system is inefficient, the economy and our families are drowning in health care costs that are out of control, and health insurance companies are making outrageous profits. We need to make the investments in health care now, to fix the broken system and ensure coverage for all, in order to achieve longer-term saving in the future.

President Obama identified \$634 billion in funding over ten years as a down payment on fixing health care. The President and others serious about health reform understand that additional funding will be needed. Congress must match the President’s commitment and work with the President to provide sufficient funding for doing health care reform right.

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### **Problem:**

- We spend billions more than other nations on health care, and yet we still have 46 million uninsured.
- Young adults have the highest uninsured rate of any age group. If we don’t act now, we fall even farther behind.
- The cost of health care has crippled the American manufacturing industry, stalling our strongest job-creation engine. The President’s budget solves this problem without adding to the deficit.
- Our economy and our families are drowning in health care costs that are out of control, while insurance companies profit.
- Costs of care for the uninsured are largely borne by those with insurance, but creating a new public plan option would spread the costs to a larger pool of insured people, lowering costs for everyone.
- Our current system is based on quantity of care, not quality. Therefore doctors are being paid for how many procedures they provide, not how healthy their patients are.



## **Progressive Budget Priorities:**

### **I. Provide an inclusive and accessible health care system in which no one is left out**

This can be accomplished with a *choice* of a private insurance plan, including keeping the insurance you have if you like it, or a public insurance plan, without a private insurer middleman, that guarantees affordable coverage. This will ensure health coverage through the largest possible pools in order to achieve affordable, quality coverage for the entire population and to share risk fairly.

### **II. Guarantee a standard for quality and preventative health benefits**

Health care benefits should cover all necessary care including preventative services and treatment needed by those with serious and chronic diseases and conditions. Our system is currently based on quantity of care rather than quality. With an unhealthy population that is not receiving quality and preventative care, costs will just continue to rise. With a standard for quality care and a focus on prevention and wellness, our health care costs will decrease as our nation's health increases.

### **III. Ensure equity in health care access, treatment, research and resources**

Disparity in health care is characterized by differences in the quality of medical care that is provided and its availability to diverse populations. While only one-third of the U.S. population is made up of racial and ethnic minorities, they represent over half of the uninsured — over 30 percent of racial and ethnic minorities are without health care coverage. Disparities in the health status involve increased rates of mortality and level of chronic disease burden. We need to address these disparities through research and ensure equality in access to treatment and resources.

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**Contact:** For more information about health care issues related to the 2010 budget, please contact:

Erica Williams | Deputy Director | Campus Progress, Center for American Progress  
(202) 741-6293 | [elwilliams@americanprogress.org](mailto:elwilliams@americanprogress.org)