

Congressman Alan Grayson

Florida - 8th Congressional District



The Health Insurance Bill -- Here are the Facts

As you may have heard, there is an awful lot of misinformation about the current legislation to reform health insurance. I'm your Congressman, and I think that you deserve the facts. Here they are, directly from the latest version that the House Energy and Commerce Committee voted on:

- (1) If you have health insurance, and you like it, you can keep it. Period.
- (2) Because of this bill, if you change jobs, you will be able to keep your health coverage. If you lose your job, you'll be able to keep your health coverage. You cannot be denied coverage or care for pre-existing conditions. If you get very ill, and require expensive treatments, your health insurance company won't be able to cut you off. No matter how expensive the treatment, even for cancer, your copayments will be capped at \$10,000. In other words, this bill requires real coverage. It offers you peace of mind.
- (3) This legislation will reduce your insurance premiums. Since everyone will be covered, you won't have to pay, through your coverage, for the expensive emergency room visits that other people with no coverage now make, at your expense. If your coverage includes a prescription drug plan, you'll pay less, because the drug companies have agreed to cut drug costs by \$80 billion. The bill also requires insurance companies to spend 85% of your insurance payments on providing health care to you. (The current average is around 70%; the rest goes to paperwork, overhead and profit.)
- (4) This bill offers you an option that you don't have now, a public option. It promotes competition by requiring insurance companies to compete against a public or non-profit option, which the Government will not subsidize. In most areas, the top one or two insurance companies provide up to 80% of the coverage, so more competition is desperately needed. The public option will be based on the existing Medicare network, for those Medicare providers who want to participate. No one – no one – will be required to accept the public option; that's why it's called an "option."
- (5) If you own a small business, don't worry. The bill will have absolutely no effect on you if your payroll is less than \$250,000, an amount that probably will increase to \$500,000 by the time that the legislation is final. If your payroll is more than that, you will need to provide your employees with

health coverage that meets the standards above. Eighty percent of all such employers already do. And the remaining twenty percent should.

(6) If you are single, and you make less than approximately \$40,000, the Government will subsidize your coverage, to make sure that you can afford it. If you have a family of four, that amount is around \$80,000. You can apply this subsidy to any plan, not only the public option. If someone makes more than these amounts, and refuses to obtain coverage, then he will have to pay 2.5% of his income to cover his emergency care, so that others like you don't have to subsidize it.

(7) If you are on Medicare, nothing in your existing coverage will be reduced. The "donut hole" on prescription drugs will be eliminated, saving you up to \$5000 a year. Co-payments will be eliminated. That's why the AARP has endorsed this legislation.

(8) If you have no coverage, and you are an American citizen, you'll get it. There are almost 40 million of us in this category. Their mortality rates are astronomical. Roughly 18,000 of them die every year, for lack of coverage.

Here are some things that the bill won't do: It won't give coverage to illegal aliens. It won't ration health care. It won't establish "death panels" to deny anyone care. It won't herd people into the public option. It won't cap doctors' salaries. It won't let the Government audit every business in America, or seize your computer or your bank records, or kill you. These are paranoid delusions, promoted by fear-mongers. They simply aren't true.

You can see all this for yourself; we've posted the entire bill at our website, Grayson.house.gov. So, will you be better off or worse off if we have health insurance reform? Now that you have the facts, you can decide.