



A Healthy Nation

Health care in the United States is too expensive, leaves more than 46 million Americans without insurance and millions more underinsured. Dennis Kucinich is the only candidate for President with a plan for a universal, single-payer, not-for-profit health care system, HR 676, now pending in Congress.

America's patchwork of for-profit, private insurers waste billions of dollars on spending that has nothing to do with paying for care. Elaborate underwriting, billing, sales and marketing divert huge amounts of money away from delivering health care. Huge profits and staggering compensation for the insurance companies' top executives and CEOs adds to the cost. Other candidates plans use taxpayer funds to subsidize these costs. HR 676 does not.

HR 676, the Conyers/Kucinich bill, will provide for true universal, single-payer, not-for-profit health care. All residents of the United States will be fully covered for medical, dental, vision, mental health and long-term care. There will be no deductibles, no co-pays, and no insurance company employees whose job it is to deny you coverage so their company makes more money. With no insurance company overhead, no executive salaries, no advertising and no golden parachutes, the administration of health care will drop from 30 percent to three percent, which is what administering Medicare costs. The rest of that money will be available for delivered health care.

In addition, the federal government will negotiate prices with the drug companies, which will keep prices down. And, since health care will be centered on preventative care, many illness will be detected and treated much earlier, when treatments are faster and much less expensive.

Under HR 676, consumers will go to their provider of choice – not be restricted to a list provided by an insurance company. Bills for service will go to the federal government. Health care will be complete and portable. We will not need some new bureaucracy to arbitrate payments between insurance companies and consumers because there will be no insurance companies standing between you and your provider.

Passage of HR 676 will unleash a wave of entrepreneurial spirit in this country, as companies have additional capital, workers are healthier and more productive, individuals can start businesses without fear of leaving their families unprotected, and family farms will not need a family member working off-farm just to earn health care.

Direct costs to employers will drop to 4.75 percent per employee — \$2,375 per \$50,000 of payroll — far less than the average cost of current employee health care benefits. Employees will also pay 4.75 percent, less than they currently pay in premiums, co-pays and deductibles. Companies will have stability in their health care. Workers will not have to juggle cost-of-living increases and health care benefits at the bargaining table.

Funding for H.R. 676 will come from:

- current health care line-items in the federal budget,
- a repeal of the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy,
- the closing of tax loop holes for corporations,
- a five percent surcharge on annual income of more than \$184,000 and a 10 percent surcharge on annual income of \$280,000 or more,
- a 0.25 percent transfer tax for both buyers and sellers will be placed on all stock and bond sales,
- the 4.75 percent payroll tax paid by employer and employee.

Today employer and employee together pay more than \$13,000 to provide insurance for an the average family of four where the employee makes \$50,000. And as we know, that insurance provides far from complete medical coverage. Under HR 676, employer and employee together will lay out \$4,750 to cover that same \$50,000 employee and family.