

Example Messages: State Issues

Trust:

Members of congress will be in the exchange: Reform requires that members of Congress get their healthcare coverage from the same plans as millions of Americans. If it's good enough for them, it's good enough for us.

Rising premiums:

Fairness: It's true that we may see health insurance premiums rise in the next couple of years, before all of the new law's provisions take effect. Unfortunately, we all know from personal experience that insurance companies have been increasing premiums for the past thirty years in pursuit of bigger profits. Reform will finally crack down on unjustified premium hikes, forcing insurers to spend a greater proportion of premiums on health care than ever before – and sending customers rebates if they don't. And when all of the new law's provisions are in place, we will finally have new competitive markets that will increase competition among insurance companies, so that premiums level off for all of us.

Individual mandate:

Personal responsibility: This bill means more Americans are taking responsibility for their health care. Just as requiring all Americans to have car insurance protects other drivers, requiring everyone to have health insurance protects taxpayers by ensuring that everyone pays their fair share. For those who are unable to afford their coverage, the bill offers the largest middle class health care tax credit in our history. And for those of us with insurance, we no longer have to pay the additional \$1,000 annually to subsidize those people who opt not to have insurance and instead rely on emergency rooms—and our payments—to cover their care.

Medicaid expansion and state budgets:

Fairness; long-term stability and security: Medicaid expansion finally brings affordable health care to millions of Americans; folks who work hard, pay their taxes, play by the rules but have not been able to afford coverage. The federal government picks up the full tab for these newly eligible people for up to three years; afterwards states begin to pick up approximately 10% of the cost. This is a shared national enterprise. Those who question the benefit of the expansion are only considering one column on the state's spread sheet. By investing in their citizens, states will begin to provide for a healthier, stronger, more productive workforce; businesses will save on costs, reinvest in their companies, and create new jobs; the state's tax base will grow; and more of our children will not have to leave their childhood homes in order to be able to secure good jobs and raise their own healthy families.

Philosophical objections i.e. “socialism”:

Government as a watchdog; no more insurance company abuses: For years insurance company bureaucrats decided if treatments recommended by doctors would be covered. Reform will ensure that insurance company bureaucrats can no longer come between you and your doctor. Reform holds insurance companies accountable by providing fair rules and setting high standards. That’s not socialism. That’s effective oversight and accountability.

System change:

Quality of care (keep it personal): My patients want me to be the best doctor I can be so I provide them with the best quality of care. Examining and talking with my patients, determining the most effective treatments, and helping my patients be more proactive in preventing disease—that’s what I was trained to do. The new law makes deliberate and careful changes to how we pay for care so doctors are rewarded for better quality rather than quantity. In the long run, this will allow me to provide the best care for my patients, and it will lower costs, making access more affordable.

Access to providers:

Peace of mind: Hard-working Americans like you should be able to count on getting high quality care, when you need it, from your personal doctor. We have had a shortage of primary care growing for thirty years. It's about time we started expanding the workforce of personal physicians and nurses. The new law makes great strides in solving this problem by expanding loan repayment for doctors going into primary care, training more physicians who will become personal physicians, paying these doctors 10% more when they care for you, and finally paying them for preventive services that weren't covered before. Our doctor shortage won't be solved overnight. But these provisions make real progress toward solving the problem in the long run.

Seniors feel that others benefit from reform at their expense:

Stability; affordability; eliminating waste, fraud and abuse: Seniors who have worked hard and played by the rules should be able to count on having security in their retirement and health care that meets their needs. This plan will strengthen Medicare for seniors and future generations by cutting waste from the system and by ending government handouts to insurance companies to ensure that Medicare funds go to improving care. It will also lower the costs of prescription drugs for seniors by closing the coverage gap in Medicare. It starts this year with a rebate for seniors who fall into the coverage gap – and over time it does away with that gap entirely.