

This Week in Health Care Reform: June 18, 2010

With President Obama's schedule largely dominated by the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, administration officials have been doing little publicly to counteract Republican opposition to the health care reform law. However, Democrat lawmakers continue to sell their plan for health care reform to Americans in the face of mixed public opinion, while Republicans push for its repeal on campaign trails across the country.

As the health care reform debate continues to take shape this year, we encourage you and others to engage members of Congress by visiting the [Health Action Network](#).

Health Care Reform

WellPoint's Affiliated Health Plans Will Begin to Offer Access to Online Services:

[WellPoint](#) recently unveiled a new [program](#) that gives its members access to doctors and other health care providers via the Internet. [Patients](#) will log into an online system that allows them to discuss symptoms and problems directly with their doctor. The [physician](#) will be able to review the patient information, chat, prescribe medicine or suggest a follow-up visit, while on the phone or over the internet. WellPoint plans to begin offering this new plan in select areas this fall.

Jobs Bill Stalls in Senate: Democrat [lawmakers](#) failed to pass the jobs bill earlier this week and are working on crafting a new package to lessen the impact on the deficit and garner some Republican support. One [provision](#) of the original bill was meant to delay a 21 percent cut in [Medicare](#) payments to doctors until 2012, but the new [package](#) offered by Senate Democrats will only delay the cut until the end of the year, saving \$16.5 billion in spending.

Public Opinion

Most Voters Still Favor Repeal: For the second week in a row, a [Rasmussen report](#) shows 58 percent of likely voters favor repeal of the new health care reform law. Meanwhile, 50 percent of Americans believe that the health care reform law is bad for the country and that it will hurt the quality of care while driving up costs and the budget deficit.

Majority of Americans Disapprove of Law: According to a recent [CNN poll](#), 56 percent of Americans disapprove of the passage of health care reform legislation, while 51 percent feel the legislation will be detrimental to the country.

Looking Ahead

While Republicans continue to offer legislation that would repeal the individual and employer mandates of the health care reform law, Democrats must show their continued support for the President's health care law, keeping the issue at the forefront of the election debate.