

This Week in Health Care Reform: June 25, 2010

President Obama and Administration officials marked the 90-day anniversary of the signing of the health care reform law by unveiling a new set of regulations to promote and explain certain provisions of the law that go into effect this year. This event was designed to garner more support for the health care reform legislation that, according to polls, many Americans are still uncertain about.

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**

***Insurance Companies and the “Patients’ Bill of Rights”:*** On Tuesday, President [Obama](#) met with top executives from some of the [nation’s](#) largest insurance companies, including WellPoint and Aetna, to discuss [premium](#) increases and health care costs. While Administration officials acknowledged increased health care costs as a primary driver for increased rates, officials reiterated that the new law requires insurance providers to file any rate increases on both the federal health care website and their own website to ensure transparency for the public.

Following the visit with the insurance industry, [President](#) Obama addressed an invited audience of supporters at the White House to mark the 90-day anniversary of the signing of the “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.” At the event, he unveiled the “[Patients’ Bill of Rights](#),” a set of [regulations](#) meant to assist consumers by touting the earliest provisions of the bill, which include: preventing children with preexisting conditions from being denied health insurance, preventing insurance companies from rescinding coverage, except in cases of fraud or intentional misrepresentation, and prohibiting lifetime limits and some annual limits.

***Doc Fix Bill Passes through the Senate:*** Last [week](#), Senate lawmakers unanimously agreed to restore [Medicare](#) reimbursements to doctors with a 2.2 percent increase in payments and to delay any further pay [cuts](#) for six months. The Senate passed the \$6.4 billion measure after a procedural [vote](#) failed to stop the pay cut earlier in the week. The Senate and House still need to pass identical legislation on this issue before it would go to the President for signature.

***DOJ Asks Judge to Dismiss Case:*** The federal lawsuit filed by Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum in March remains active pending a hearing this fall. On Wednesday, a Justice Department [official](#) asked a Florida federal judge to dismiss the multiparty [lawsuit](#) contesting the constitutionality of the new health care reform law. Attorneys [General](#) in 20 states filed the suit alleging the new health care reform law infringes on Constitutional rights by mandating that citizens purchase health care coverage or pay a penalty. A hearing is set for Sept.14 to review the case.

### **Public Opinion**

***Most Voters Still Wary of Health Care Reform Law:*** In a recent [Rasmussen report](#), 55 percent of likely voters favor repeal of the new health care reform law. Meanwhile, the survey shows that a majority of people with health insurance like the coverage they have, but are skeptical that they will be able to keep it under the new law. Forty-four percent of Americans believe the new health care reform law will force them to leave their plan and find new health insurance coverage.

### **Looking Ahead**

With midterm elections on the horizon, Congressional Democrats continue to triumph health care reform to potential voters, while Republicans take an opposite view on the legislation and promise to repeal the bill in the next Congress, should they become the majority party in the Congress.