

MEDIA FAIRNESS CAUCUS

A Look at Media Bias

Rep. Lamar Smith (R-TX), Chairman

Rep. Jack Kingston (R-GA), Co-Chair

Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN), Co-Chair

ABC to Shill for Obama Health Plan

6/24/09



On Wednesday, those tuning in to ABC for news coverage instead will see an extended commercial for President Obama and his government-run health care system.

According to ABC, the network will feature “the president’s health care agenda” during its morning, evening, and prime time news programs, as well as on its website. The finale will be a health care town hall meeting with President Obama, broadcast from the White House.

ABC should present both sides of the health care debate, not just the Administration’s side. **Unfortunately, ABC has announced no plans to devote time to an opposing viewpoint.** In fact, they have refused to air ads critical of the Administration’s health care plan. It is this kind of biased news programming that has caused Americans to lose faith in the national media.

Media Should Report Facts about Health Care

Last week, twelve separate articles in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Los Angeles Times* reported that 46 million people don’t have health insurance in America. And President Obama is trying to justify a government takeover of health care because of this figure. **But not one of the articles explained that this number is a hoax.**

Fourteen million are eligible for existing government programs like Medicare and Medicaid, but have not enrolled. Almost ten million uninsured are not U.S. citizens. Nine million have high incomes and can afford health insurance but chose not to purchase it. Two million are in prison. And millions more are without insurance for only a few months between jobs.



When you whittle down the 46 million figure, you get about 10 million people who truly need health insurance. These people can be taken care of without replacing the best health care system in the world. The media should give Americans all the facts on health care, not mislead them with only part of the story.

Media Should Save Opinions for Editorials

The line between news reporting and opinion has become non-existent. Take two recent examples:

First, this opinionated sentence from *The Washington Post* on America’s health care system: “**Nowhere else in the world is so much money spent with such poor results.**”

Second, this sarcastic comment from *The New York Times* on Supreme Court nominee Judge Sotomayor: “**Of course, it is not as if a lawyer and judge with a history of involvement in racial issues has not made it onto the Supreme Court. Thurgood Marshall, a fierce advocate for racial justice as a lawyer for the N.A.A.C.P., sailed onto the highest bench in the 1960s.**”

Amazingly, these blatant opinions are from front-page news stories, not editorials. Newspapers should report the facts and save opinions for the editorial page.

Distributed by Congressman Lamar Smith. For regular e-mail updates, please visit <http://lamarsmith.house.gov>
For more information please contact Dan Rosso at 202-225-4236 or dan.rosso@mail.house.gov