



THE WINNING ARGUMENT: John McCain's Health Care Plan

I. John McCain's health care plan is a radical attack on the employer-based system.

- John McCain's health care plan will put the 158 million Americans who currently get health care through their jobs at risk of losing it. McCain wants to eliminate the tax breaks for workers receiving employer-based coverage, wiping out the main incentive employers have to provide health coverage to their employees and likely causing millions of workers to lose coverage.

II. McCain's plan puts sick people at risk of being uninsured.

- As Elizabeth Edwards [has pointed out](#), neither she nor McCain would be guaranteed coverage under his plan. His plan does not guarantee coverage for the 56 million people with pre-existing conditions – a category that includes everything from cancer to hay fever – and would force them into the individual market, where insurance companies could charge them exorbitant rates or even deny them coverage.
- McCain has said he would draw on the experiences of the states in creating these pools, but the experiences of states show that high risk pools have high costs and provide little benefits.
 - Thirty states use preexisting condition exclusions to limit enrollment into their high-risk pools.
 - Roughly half of the state high risk pools have deductibles of \$1,000, putting pressure on those with chronic diseases.
 - In many cases, high risk pools impose a lifetime benefit maximum.

III. McCain's plan will increase costs for millions of families.

- McCain's tax subsidies will increase taxes on millions of households, and for millions more it falls short of making insurance affordable.
- McCain's plan will generate as much as \$20 billion in new administrative costs – the fastest-rising cost in the health care industry. Administrative costs are much higher in the individual market, and McCain's push to expand that market could cause them to increase by more than 20 percent over 2007 levels.

IV. McCain's plan is written to benefit big health insurance companies.



- McCain's plan will push people into the individual market, where insurers can refuse to cover pre-existing conditions and deny coverage outright. In fact, insurers will have even more leverage than they do today. McCain would deregulate the health insurance industry and [allow insurers to choose states with weak consumer protections](#) as their base for national operations – just like credit card companies choose states with weak financial regulations today. .
- McCain wants to give a nearly \$2 billion per-year tax break to the 10 biggest health insurance companies in America.