

OFA Meetings June 6th
Talking Points for Doctors for America Physicians

Hi, my name is _____
I am a physician from _____. My specialty is _____
Thank you for holding this health reform meeting and for having me join you.

As a doctor on the front line of our health care system, I know the health care system is broken that health reform is urgently needed this year. Keeping “status quo” for our health care system is not sustainable and is unacceptable. As a physician, I believe health reform must be passed this year.

With your support, we have an opportunity ensure reform happens it this year. If this window of opportunity closes, we may not have another chance for years.

From my perspective as a physician, we have the three main problems in the health care system:

1. Costs are escalating

- The US spent 2.3 trillion on healthcare or around \$7,000 per person.
- The US spends more than any other country in the world
- Health care costs have risen rapidly over the past 5 years while wages have remained stagnant; it becomes more unaffordable each year.
- The cost of health care for the average American family is \$16,771
- Half of all bankruptcies are related to medical expenses

2. Americans don't have access to care

- 47 million people have no health insurance coverage; 87 million people were uninsured at some point in 2007 and 2008
- Even people with insurance have difficulty accessing the care they need due to lack of sufficient doctors in many regions of the country.

3. Despite spending more than any other country, there are gaps in quality.

- Most people get about 50% of the recommended care they should receive
- The United States achieved an overall score of 65 out of 100 across 37 indicators of healthcare quality

**TELL A BRIEF PERSONAL STORY ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE
BROKEN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM**

Examples:

-pt admitted to the hospital b/c they didn't fill a script b/c it was too expensive; insurance company denying care; med student not choosing primary care b/c reimbursement and practice environment is unsustainable; pt using the ED b/c they don't have insurance, etc

Fortunately, Congress and President Obama are acting with urgency to move forward on health reform. While there are many proposed solutions to our health care crisis “doing nothing is NOT an option.” As a physician, I believe health reform must be passed this year.

If you are asked about how you would like to see the health care system change:

Health reform should include:

- **Affordable, high quality health coverage for Americans.**

- With insurance coverage, I can ensure that my patients have access to necessary health care.
- **Lower health costs for businesses and government.**
 - There is waste in the system that we need to get rid of.
 - Focusing on primary care, prevention and wellness will actually lower costs in the long run while keeping patients healthy.
- **Payment for physicians that rewards value and not just volume of services.**
 - Right now, it is only the number of patients seen and number procedures done that matters in physician payment. What should matter is keeping my patients healthy.
- **Preservation of the doctor-patient relationship**
 - I want the health care system to help me improve the coordination of care for my patients in a very complex health system
 - The health care system should ensure that treatment decisions are made by doctors and patients, without unnecessary intrusion by insurance companies.
- **Encouraging prevention and wellness**
 - Chronic, preventable diseases represent 70% of our health care costs.
 - We need a system that helps prevent these diseases, by emphasizing cancer screening, smoking cessation, exercise, weight loss, and immunizations.