

Media in the States of Centrist Senators

**A DailyKos.com Dairy Entry, a My.BarackObama.com Blog Entry,
An OpEdNews.com Article, and an E-Mail to Progressive Activists**

September 11, 2009

In the wake of President Barack Obama's stirring and historic speech this week to a joint session of Congress, I have prepared a research paper to aid those who want to help the health care reform effort by grassroots action; namely, contacting the media in the states (or commonwealths) of those "centrist" Democratic and Republican senators whose votes will most likely be decisive, given the partisan divide on the issue in the Senate and the large Democratic majority in the House in favor of reform.

The report, entitled ***Media in the States of Centrist Senators***, is in Microsoft Word format—with active hyperlinks within the text—and it is downloadable (and printable) from here:

<http://douglasdrenkow.com/docs/centristsmedia.doc>

If you have trouble downloading the file, I can e-mail it to you as an attachment (less than 1 MB in size).

To introduce each state in question, I present its vote in the 2008 presidential election.

Then I present information on the one or two senators from that state generally recognized as

"centrist": I present their Senate Web site address, their address in the "Open Congress" wiki, their membership (or not) in the "Moderate Dem(s) Working Group" (which met with the president the day after his speech), whether or not they are in the "Gang of Six" trying to reach bipartisan agreement on health care (Note that I have included all of the Gang of Six, even though most are not generally, otherwise considered "centrist"), and when they next face re-election.

Then for the state I present its "Blogroll: Covering Congress," from the "Open Congress" wiki, with links to political blogs in the state.

Finally, I present data for the four biggest cities within the state. For each city, I present its population, its fact-filled Web page in <http://www.city-data.com>, its TV stations, its News Talk radio stations, and its newspapers—if no data exist, I simply omit that category (Sources of all the data are included and linked in the report).

I hope that this information proves useful for further research—almost all TV and radio stations as well as newspapers have Web sites, with contact information and often public blogs—all of which can prove useful in sharing

information with the people in these key states—through interviews (as via Skype for TV or telephone for radio) or writing (as in blogs or Letters to the Editor). That can help turn public opinion more in favor of health care reform. As the president did this week, policies can be clarified, myths can be debunked, and stories of the life-and-death consequences of inaction can touch hearts in any state of the Union.

Just remember, although these "centrist" senators and their "moderate," "independent," or even "conservative" constituents may well determine whether or not America gets health care reform, they are not the "enemy." They might be misinformed on some issues; but overall, they are usually united by a sense of "fiscal responsibility." Fortunately, the policies we pursue will result in great savings for families, businesses, and government. If we frame our messages to centrists in those terms, we should achieve our best results.

In particular, when discussing a "public option" remind folks that it would be just one choice among many for insurance buyers; but because it is non-profit, it would naturally tend to bring down the prices of its for-profit competitors as well—that is, if the public option were on a national scale, unlike the regional co-ops being proposed, so that the public plan could have sufficient leverage to negotiate the lowest prices. Like most progressives, I have not heard of a means better than a public option for cost-control, other than strict government regulation of prices, which is not under consideration by Congress and which would undoubtedly incite much the same opposition as for a public option.

In effect, we are selling "insurance for insurance." And though most folks don't like to have an insurance agent call on them, most people today realize the need for change in our health care system. Trillions of dollars and millions of lives are truly at stake.

Change health care? Yes, we can!

Doug

P.S. If you or others need any further motivation, remember the heartrending, true stories of loss under the current health care system, as I caught on videotape at the Organizing for America / Health Care for America NOW! rally last week ...

<http://douglasdrenkow.com/market4d.html#ofala>

As the president keeps reminding us, the status quo is not an option!