



Affordable, Accessible, Quality Health Care for ALL

Framing the Debate: Responding to “Not Now, The State Budget Is In Crisis”

BACKGROUND

Those legislators that want to delay the implementation of health care reform use a variety of reasons for inaction. One of the arguments against enacting reform on the state level is that “the state budget is in crisis right now.” Our opponents use the same old “politics-as-usual” excuses and say that since there are several years’ worth of outstanding Medicaid expenses that the state is responsible for paying, it is not a good time to pass health care reform until the budget crisis is resolved.

This argument completely discounts the fact that 79 percent of Illinois voters have said that having quality, affordable, guaranteed health care enacted in Illinois is a top priority for them. It also ignores the fact that the skyrocketing cost of health care is causing the budgets of working families and businesses to go into crisis, as well as the state’s budget, and that passing comprehensive reform would alleviate pressure on all those budgets.

We need to reframe the debate to focus on what their “Do Nothing” approach actually costs Illinois’ working families and businesses. Focus on the impact of rising health care costs on working families and businesses, the effect of legislative inaction on the people of Illinois, and the positive financial impacts the 2007 health care reform proposal will provide when enacted. Ask the General Assembly to stop sitting back and doing nothing. Ask them why they have yet to enact this proposal, when doing so will relieve financial pressure on the state, the businesses, and the working people of Illinois.

BRIDGING/TRANSITIONING TO OUR MESSAGE:

REMEMBER: Q = A + 1

In a media interview or Q&A speaking situation, you seize the advantage by addressing the actual question briefly (A) then moving to the point YOU need to make (+1).

At this point in the campaign, our “+1” should be: **Passing comprehensive health care reform in Illinois would actually alleviate pressure on the state budget. It is the fiscally responsible thing to do.**

Here are six ‘bridges’ you can use to transition from “A” to “+1”.

- *...but what’s important to US is . . .*
- *. . . but again, the BIG issue is . . .*
- *. . . but what’s REALLY important to small businesses and working families is . . .*
- *That’s fine. That’s what I would expect to hear from our critics. But the ISSUE here is . . .*
- *That’s what critics of health care reform always say – and it’s always wrong. The TRUTH is . . .*

A Project of the Campaign for Better Health Care

Central/Statewide • 44 E. Main St., # 414 • Champaign, IL 61820 • 217.352.5600 • (f) 217.352.5688
Chicago • 1325 S. Wabash Ave., # 305 • Chicago, IL 60605 • 312.913.9449 • (f) 312.913.9559