



# NEWSLETTER

January 21, 2011

## OVERVIEW

The last two weeks have been busy on the health care reform front. There were significant developments on several policy fronts including the effort to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the health care lawsuits, and administrative decisions. Many of our leaders throughout the country participated in press conferences and other events in support of health reform. Many of you were on TV and had letters to the editor published. Keep up the hard work. The fight isn't over yet. Read on to learn about some key legislative and policy developments as well as the work all of you are doing in your communities.

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## KEY POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

### *Health Care Reform Repeal Vote*

The rescheduled vote on the health care repeal bill finally took place. It was originally slated to be voted on last week, but House leadership postponed the vote in the wake of the shooting of Representative Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ) on January 8<sup>th</sup>. The rescheduled vote occurred on Wednesday, January 19. The repeal bill passed the House vote of [245 to 189](#). Three Democrats joined all 245 Republicans in supporting the measure. The Democrats voting for the repeal bill include Representative Dan Boren (D-OK), Representative Mike McIntyre (D-NC), and Representative Mike Ross (D-AR). The bill is now headed to the Senate where it is not expected to pass. Also on Thursday, January 20, the [House voted to instruct four committees](#) to draft alternative health care proposals that reflect Republican priorities, such as reducing medical malpractice lawsuits, prohibiting the denial of coverage to people with pre-existing conditions and barring the use of taxpayer money for abortions.

### *More Health Care Lawsuits*

An [additional six states](#) are asking to join the Florida lawsuit challenging the health care reform law. If they are allowed to join the lawsuit it would bring the total tally up to 26 states. The new states include Iowa, Ohio, Kansas, Wyoming, Wisconsin and Maine. The

Florida multi-state suit is the most high-profile of several legal challenges to the constitutionality of the health care reform law. The issue is widely expected to reach the Supreme Court. Also on January 18, Kathleen Sebelius, in her official capacity as Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, [appealed the decision](#) of the U.S. District Court ruling in Virginia granting a partial summary judgment to the plaintiffs.

### ***New Regulations on Value-Based Purchasing***

On January 7, 2011, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a [proposed rule](#) spelling out how hospitals will be rewarded for providing high-quality care for patients, as required by the Affordable Care Act. Under the law, known as value-based purchasing, hospitals that perform well on measures relating to quality of care and patient experience would get higher Medicare payments. CMS is currently accepting public comments until March 8. CMS is expected to issue a final rule sometime next year.

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## **DFA MEMBERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE**

### **Highlights from the last week:**

- On January 10, DFA Board member Dr. Mona Mangat published a letter to the editor in the St. Petersburg Times. For more see [Health law's achievements: Positive effects evident](#).
- On January 10, DFA member Dr. Daniel Fass in the Journal News entitled [Health-care law repeal would be a mistake](#).
- On January 11, Vermont Director Becky Jones published an opinion piece in the Brattleboro Reformer.
- DFA member Delaney Ruston is going to be releasing a new film exploring mental health by following the lives of 4 such people living in India, China, France, and the US. You can find out more about Delaney's work by going to [My Doc Productions](#).
- On January 14, Ohio Director Dr. Don Nguyen appeared in [The Christian Science Monitor](#) as part of DFA's petition campaign in Ohio.
- January 15-16, Virginia Director Dr. Chris Lillis participated in three health reform forums for the NBC 4 Health Expo held in Washington, DC.
- On January 18, DFA was the featured partner of the month on [Florida Community Health Action Information Network](#).
- On January 19, Dr. Don Nguyen was interviewed for a story on health reform on WDTN NBC Channel 2 in Dayton, OH.
- On January 19, Virginia Director Dr. Chris Lillis was quoted in the [Washington Post](#) supporting health care reform and opposing repeal efforts.

- On January 19, DFA was quoted in a White House press release: [Health Care Providers: What They're Saying About the Affordable Care Act](#).

## WHAT YOU CAN DO

### 1. Educate Your Colleagues, Patients and Community

Physicians across the country are educating their community about the impact of the new health care law. Play a role and pledge 15 minutes of your time to educate your patients and community by participating in the [Speak The Truth About Health Reform Campaign!](#)

#### Tell us what you have been up to:

Do you have an interesting story to share? Have you participated in meetings or discussions on health reform? Let us hear about it by contacting Doctors for America at [josh.spaulding@drsforamerica.org](mailto:josh.spaulding@drsforamerica.org).

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#### News stories:

- [Protecting Americans with Pre-existing Conditions](#)
- [Health-care players clash over new rules](#)
- [Gallup Poll May Exaggerate Support For Full Repeal Of Health Care Law](#)
- [The Public, Health Care Reform, and Views on Repeal](#)
- [Harvard Economist Estimates Health Repeal Would Destroy Up To 400,000 Jobs Per Year Over Decade](#)

#### Stay informed on latest developments

You can stay informed on the latest developments in health care reform by following DFA on [Progress Notes](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Sincerely,

The Doctors for America Team

*Doctors for America is a grassroots group of over 15,000 physicians with a presence in all fifty states fighting for a system in which every American has equal access to quality healthcare. We envision a fair, effective and affordable healthcare system — one fundamentally transformed and guided by the core values of doctors and their patients.*