

July 15 / Administration of Barack Obama, 2009

and come together to build a system that works not just for these nurses, but for the patients they care for, for doctors and hospitals, for families and businesses, and for our very future as a nation.

I'm confident it's going to get done because we've got a great team behind us. And we are going to be continually talking about this for the next 2 to 3 weeks until we've got a bill off

the Senate and we've got a bill out of the House. Then we'll deserve a few weeks rest before we come back and finally get a bill done so we can sign it right here in the Rose Garden.

Thank you, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:11 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House.

Statement on Senate Action on Health Care Reform Legislation *July 15, 2009*

Today, thanks to the unyielding passion and inspiration provided by Senator Edward Kennedy, the HELP Committee he chairs has produced a proposal that will finally lower health care costs, provide better care for patients, and ensure fair treatment of consumers by the insurance industry.

Like the legislation produced by the House of Representatives, this proposal would offer Americans quality, affordable health care that is there when they need it. No longer will insurance companies be able to deny coverage based on a preexisting medical condition. No longer will Americans have to worry about their health insurance if they lose their job, change their job, or open a new business.

This proposal will bring down costs, expand coverage, and increase choice. Through a health insurance exchange, families and small businesses will be able to compare prices and quality so that they can choose the health care plan that best suits their needs. Among the choices that would be available in the exchange would be a public health insurance op-

tion that would make health care affordable by increasing competition, providing more choices, and keeping the insurance companies honest.

This proposal would also control rising costs by investing in preventive care and wellness programs, rooting out waste and fraud in the system, and changing the incentives that automatically equate the most expensive care with the best care. When this proposal is combined with other proposals that the Senate Finance Committee is working on, it's estimated that health reform will cover 97 percent of all Americans.

The HELP Committee's success should give us hope, but it should not give us pause. It should instead provide the urgency for both the House and Senate to finish their critical work on health reform before the August recess. I want to commend Senator Kennedy, Senator Dodd, as well as Senators Harkin, Mikulski, Bingaman, and Murray on the leadership they've shown and the foundation they've laid to reform our health care system.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Education Reform Legislation *July 15, 2009*

I applaud Chairman Miller for introducing an education reform bill that will cut giveaways to special interests, invest in our children's future, and save taxpayers' money.

Chairman Miller and I are working to end the wasteful subsidies that are given to banks and private lenders for student loans. Instead,

his legislation will make college more affordable by paying for annual increases in Pell grants that keep pace with inflation. He's also working with us to simplify financial aid forms and increase graduation rates.

This legislation will also help us reach the goal I set out in Michigan this week to

graduate 5 million more Americans from community colleges by 2020. These institutions can act as job training centers for the 21st century, and this legislation makes the largest investment in community colleges in 50 years, challenging them to increase completion rates, strengthen ties with businesses, modernize facilities, and offer new online learning opportunities. Chairman Miller's legislation will also invest in high-quality early education that can save taxpayers several dollars for every one we

spend. It includes \$10 billion for early learning challenge grants that will ask States to ensure that the number of children who start school ready to learn is growing each year.

Finally, I am proud that this legislation not only pays for itself, but also saves taxpayers money and reduces the deficit. I look forward to working with the chairman and Congress to make this bill even stronger and pass it before the end of the year.

Remarks at a Fundraiser for Governor Jon S. Corzine in Holmdel, New Jersey July 16, 2009

Thank you. It is good to see you. Hello, New Jersey. All right, everybody have a seat. Everybody have a seat. I want to begin by just making a few acknowledgements. First of all, I'm going to have a lot to say about this guy, but I just want everybody to know that one of my earliest supporters, somebody who had faith and confidence in me before I was a United States Senator was the man standing next to me right here, Jon Corzine. And so it is a special honor to be with him.

I've got a couple other friends I want to quickly acknowledge. Larry Cohen is around here somewhere—CWA—right here. We appreciate you, Larry, president of the Communication Workers. We've got a couple of outstanding mayors: The pride of Newark, Cory Booker is here—there's Cory in the back; and we've also got the pride of Jersey City, Jerramiah Healy.

I want to just say a little something at the top. As many of you may have heard, five officers were shot in the line of duty in Jersey City. Jerramiah may—I just saw him. We just discussed it. He may already be on his way back. Obviously, we are watching this closely. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of all the officers who've been hurt. And we are confident they are going to end up coming back strong as ever. But it's a reminder for all of us of the incredible sacrifice that our law enforcement officials engage in, and their families are part of, each and every day. So I hope everybody keeps them in their thoughts and prayers in the days to come.

It is great to be back in New Jersey. I'm proud to stand with a man who wakes up every single day thinking about your future and the future of the State, and that's your Governor, Jon Corzine.

Like many of us in public life today, Jon is a leader who's been called to govern at some extraordinary times. He's been tested by the worst recession in half a century, a recession that was caused by years of recklessness and irresponsibility, and obviously, had a disproportionate impact here in New Jersey, given the closeness of the financial sector to the State.

Part of the crisis was caused by the same small thinking that's plagued our politics for decades, the kind of thinking that says we can afford to tinker around with big problems, put off tough decisions, defer the big challenges, tell people only what they want to hear.

That's not the kind of leader Jon Corzine is. He didn't run for this office on the promise that change would be easy, and he certainly has not avoided what is hard. This isn't somebody who's here because of some special interest or political machine, he's here because he cares about what happens to the people of New Jersey.

This is a man who has provided more property tax relief than any other Governor in New Jersey's history. This is the first Governor in 60 years who has reduced the size of government. At the same time, this is also a leader who has stood up against those who wanted to cut what matters, like education. Jon Corzine has not only protected funding for New Jersey's schools, he's reformed them with higher standards, and