



Tennessee Health Care Campaign

Working for Guaranteed Affordable Choices

Why & How Tennessee's Congressional Delegation Will Play An Important Role in Winning National Health Care Reform

US Senate

Despite talk in some quarters of using the reconciliation procedure, most agree that it will be best to win national health care reform through bi-partisan agreement. In the US Senate, where the battle must be waged and won before it ever gets to the US House, a vote of support from 60 senators is needed. This, of course, means that Republican support is essential. THCC believes that Tennessee's moderate Republican senators, Sen. Lamar Alexander and Sen. Bob Corker, will be two of the essential GOP votes.

- *Both Tennessee senators have publicly stated that we must reform our health care system and that it must be done now.*
- *Both Tennessee senators voted for the reauthorization of S-CHIP in 2009 (and 2007).*
- *Both senators voted to postpone a 10% cut in Medicare provider reimbursements in 2007.*
- *Sen. Corker is on record as stating that we have a "moral" obligation to cover everyone.*
- *Sen. Corker is the former mayor of Chattanooga, former TN Commissioner of Finance and Administration & ran the TennCare/Medicaid program, and he is a former small business owner, so his opinion is respected in the business community.*
- *Sen. Alexander is the former governor of Tennessee and understands the need and importance of public coverage through the Medicare, Medicaid, and S-CHIP programs.*

There will be many separate issues regarding guaranteeing coverage for all Americans. It is anticipated that there will be a comprehensive bill on the Senate floor in July that will blend public and private elements. THCC is already engaging in strategies to educate Sen. Alexander and Sen. Corker about the elements we want to see and to win their support.

US House of Representatives

As far as Tennessee's nine US House members, we anticipate that the vote for reform will come down on party lines, with the five Democratic representatives voting in favor and the four ultra conservative Republicans voting against. We expect Blue Dog Democrat Rep. Jim Cooper (Dist. 5 - Nashville) to be a leader on the issue as he is a co-sponsor of the Wyden-Bennett bill and has been speaking publicly about the need for reform for more than nine months. We also expect to hold sway with their colleagues the voices of Blue Dog Democrats Lincoln Davis (Dist. 4 Rural Mid & Upper Cumberland) and John Tanner (Dist. 8 - West Rural), moderate Democrat Bart Gordon (Dist. 6 - Middle Rural), and liberal Democrat Steve Cohen (Dist. 9 - Memphis). As with the senators, THCC is already engaging these members.



Tennessee Health Care Campaign (THCC)
1103 Chapel Ave., Nashville, TN 37206
(615) 227-7500 • Fax: (615) 846-1946 • Toll-free: 1-877-431-7083 • Web site: www.thcc2.org
Susan McKay, Director of Communications & Development; Email: smckay@thcc2.org