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News & Opinion

Congress Approves \$3.4 Trillion Spending Plan

Congress approved a \$3.4 trillion spending blueprint last week, "setting the stage for President Obama to pursue the first major overhaul of the nation's health-care system in a generation," reports the *Washington Post*.

(Source: Montgomery, *Washington Post*, 4/30/09)

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Sebelius Is Confirmed as Health Secretary

The Senate has confirmed Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius as secretary of health and human services, "allowing President Obama to fill the last vacancy in his cabinet with a seasoned politician," who will "lead the administration's campaign for universal health insurance," reports the *New York Times*.

(Source: Pear, *New York Times*, 4/29/09)

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Specter's Move to the Democratic Party Could Help Advance Health Reform

Opinions differ over whether Pennsylvania Senator Arlen Specter's defection to the Democratic Party will be a big boost for the Obama administration's health care reform efforts, since the former Republican is well known for his "independent streak," reports *USA Today*.

(Source: Fritze, *USA Today*, 4/29/09)

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Health Care Ads Support Reform

More than a half-billion dollars has been spent on health care reform television ads in 2007 and 2008, substantially more than the \$20 million spent in 1994 during the Clinton administration, and most express support for current reform efforts, reports *Politico*.

(Source: Frates, *Politico*, 5/3/09)

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NPR Assesses Obama’s Progress on Health Care During First 100 Days

In assessing President Barack Obama’s progress on health care reform during his first 100 days in office, NPR’s "Morning Edition" reports that "the administration can already claim several health care accomplishments," but most health care observers only give lawmakers a "50-50 chance" of getting a major reform bill passed.

(Source: *Rovner, Morning Edition, 4/29/09*)



Obama Has Made Health Care His "Policy Centerpiece"

President Obama has "staked his presidency" on reforming the health care system, and "in the coming weeks, Obama will learn whether he’s defied the odds and is on a path toward victory and a place in the history books," reports Politico.

(Source: *Cummings, Politico, 5/3/09*)



OPINION: Flu Crisis Highlights Importance of Fixing Health Care System

The swine flu that is spreading throughout the county "should be a wake-up call, a reminder that one of our vulnerabilities to the possible pandemic is our deeply flawed medical system," writes *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof.

(Source: *Kristof, New York Times, 5/3/09*)



OPINION: Government Should Stay Out of Personal Health Decisions

"President Obama admitted he wants the government to decide what health care Americans receive," but Americans trust the judgment of their doctors "far more than they trust government statisticians matching approved treatments to reported illnesses based on lifeless charts," according to a *Washington Times* editorial.

(Source: *Editorial, Washington Times, 5/1/09*)



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