



Improving Health Care for American Families

“It is time to speak again and stand again for the ideal that in the richest nation ever on this planet, it is wrong for 41 million Americans, most of them in working families, to worry at night and wake up in the morning without the basic protection of health insurance. We need a President who goes to the Oval Office each day determined to make access to affordable, quality health care a right and not a privilege. ... Why not give every working American access to high-quality, affordable health care?”

-- John Kerry; Sacramento, California; March 14, 2003

Every American deserves access to high quality health care. Unfortunately, today millions of Americans don't have that access because their health insurance is inadequate or they have no insurance at all. Today, more than 40 million Americans, including 10 million children, have no health care coverage. Another 190 million are enrolled in managed care plans that can deny the care their doctors prescribe because they lack basic patient rights. And, 14 million seniors have no coverage for the prescription drugs they need to stay healthy and out of the hospital. John Kerry believes that if we want a strong economy and strong families, we should not rest until we have tackled the health care crisis and made quality health care more affordable and accessible to every American. Kerry also supports expanding access to prescription drugs and guaranteeing parity for mental health illnesses. And he will fight to create a strong Patients Bill of Rights; establish a meaningful prescription drug benefit through Medicare for seniors and to increase funding for cutting edge medical research.

Here is some of what John Kerry has done and will do to improve Health Care in America:

Expand Access to Children's Health Care: In the wealthiest nation in the world there is no reason that any child should go without health care. John Kerry fought for the creation of the Children's Health Insurance Program in 1997, which marked the largest investment in children's health care in a generation. But we still have work to do to provide high quality health care to all children.

Enact a Strong Patient's Bill of Rights: Too often even patients with insurance cannot see their own doctor or pursue the best treatment options because their insurer will pay only for the cheapest care. John Kerry supported the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act of 2001 that would have given patients critical protections like the right to see a specialist, the right to emergency room care, and the ability to enforce the rights. And as President, he will make passage of a meaningful Patients' Bill of Rights a priority.

www.JohnKerry.Com

Paid for by John Kerry for President, Inc.

Contributions or gifts to John Kerry for President, Inc. are not tax deductible
Printed by volunteers

Provide an Affordable Prescription Drug Benefit for Seniors: Prescription drugs have become an indispensable part of health care today, especially for older Americans. Unfortunately, Medicare does not cover prescription drugs, leaving many seniors to choose between prescription drugs and food or rent. John Kerry is working to create a meaningful prescription drug benefit under Medicare and voted for the Medicare Outpatient Prescription Drug Act of 2002. He also supports legislation that ends loopholes that keep quality affordable generic drugs from the market.

Increase Access to Quality Long-Term Care: Millions of American families struggle to find affordable, quality long-term care for their aged and disabled relatives. To help these families, John Kerry supports legislation to ensure that nursing homes and home health agencies are properly staffed, and tax credits for the purchase of quality long-term care insurance.

Support Quality Medical Research: John Kerry is an outspoken advocate for increased funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which supports medical research across the country. Increased funds for research could mean cures for some of our nation's most debilitating diseases such as cancer, Parkinson's disease, and Alzheimer's disease. Our nation must have a new resolve in winning the war against disease.

Ensure Mental Health Parity: Persons with mental health illnesses too often face unfair treatment limitations, higher deductibles or even outright denials of coverage. John Kerry will work to end discrimination against persons with mental health illnesses by extending protections against unfair limits on mental health care and working for full Medicare reimbursements for mental health services.

Honor The Commitment to Our Veterans: John Kerry is a decorated Vietnam combat veteran who has fought to ensure we have a military second to none, that our troops are taken care of when we send them into harm's way and that when we bring them home we give them the respect they are due. Kerry was among the first to speak out when the Administration threatened to cut funds and limit access to health care for Veterans. As President, John Kerry will ensure that this country keeps its commitment that we will never leave our veterans behind.

Fair Treatment of Rural Healthcare: Americans in rural areas face special challenges when looking for quality healthcare. John Kerry fought to restore cuts to rural health care programs and will work to address the inequitable reimbursement rates that hurt rural hospitals, health providers and seniors.

Supporting Health Professionals: The nursing workforce shortage is a major crisis. From 1995-1998, nursing school enrollments dropped by 21%. Realizing the need to attract new men and women to this important work, John Kerry introduced the Nurse Reinvestment Act to strengthen and support America's nursing workforce. The Act was signed into law in August 2002. The Nurse Reinvestment Act responds to the nursing shortage by recruiting new nurses to serve in our hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies and hospices. Kerry has also fought to prohibit mandatory overtime and other practices that have led to a decline in working conditions.

www.JohnKerry.Com

Paid for by John Kerry for President, Inc.

Contributions or gifts to John Kerry for President, Inc. are not tax deductible
Printed by volunteers