The effort to reform the nation’s health care system and to establish for the first time a federal government obligation to make sure that all citizens have access to affordable health insurance has ignited a furious debate across the country. In town hall meetings and the halls of Congress, national attention is focused on how to fix a system that costs $2.5 trillion a year and affects the lives of every American.

The current health care system is a complicated patchwork of private insurance for most Americans and government-provided Medicare and Medicaid for the elderly and the poor. The U.S. spends more on health care than any other country, and yet ranks behind many industrialized nations on important measures of health. With costs rising and tens of millions of Americans without coverage, most agree on the need for change.

Congress and the Obama Administration have been struggling to agree on the nature of reform. Options range from guaranteeing universal coverage through a government-run health plan to reforms that sustain a market for health care based on private insurers and employment. At issue are competing visions of social justice and the role of government. Proponents of more government involvement say it is the only way to insure universal access to affordable, quality care, a goal that has eluded every president since Franklin Roosevelt. Critics say an expanded role for government will needlessly complicate health care, increase costs and limit the ability of patients to choose their doctors, hospitals and treatments.

Now it’s your turn to answer the question:

Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?

**YES**

- Health care is a right and as a matter of social justice the government should be responsible for making sure that every American has access to affordable coverage and quality care.
- Expanding eligibility for government programs like Medicare and Medicaid could cover large ranks of the uninsured.
- Increased government regulation could prevent health insurers from rejecting anyone for coverage because of pre-existing conditions or basing rates on their health.
- Government provided health insurance would compete with private plans on cost and would reduce the number of Americans who are uninsured and underinsured.

**NO**

- Creating a guarantee of universal coverage would vastly expand the role of the federal government in the lives of the American people, who are better off with the freedom to make their own health care choices.
- Large government programs are almost always inefficient and broadening eligibility would increase federal spending dramatically.
- Regulatory mandates will increase costs, which insurance companies will pass along to consumers.
- A public plan would have a competitive advantage that will drive private plans out of business, leaving consumers with no choice.
“Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?”

We the People
The Constitution and the common good.

The Constitution
Article I, Section 7: The Congress shall have Power To...provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

QUOTES TO CONSIDER

In short, the points we are making as we consider the options of affordable health insurance and the value that competing insurance companies will offer our consumers. The Constitution and the common good.

VALUES CONSTITUTION AND QUOTES

Values is a way of asking the right question and confronting the challenge of the times, that of fighting for what is right and for the causes we hold dear. We are called to be stewards of the Constitution and the common good.

WHAT IS DELIBERATION?

Point of View 1

Students will be able to evaluate multiple points of view on the issue of health care reform.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A CONSTITUTIONAL BILL?

The Constitution Center at 2 East Market Street in Philadelphia, PA 19106.

WHAT IS DELIBERATION?

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WHAT CONSTITUTION AND QUOTES

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INTRODUCTION

Q: Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?

Point of View 1

Congress and the President have signed into law a governance-health insurance plan that does not compel individuals to purchase insurance. The private health insurance market will be allowed to continue to operate. However, individuals will be taxed if they do not purchase health insurance. Individuals will be able to purchase insurance on their own or through a cooperative. Congress and the President will continue to monitor the health care system to ensure that it is operating efficiently and fairly.

Possible Negative Consequences

According to new variance, the potential tax on those who do not purchase health insurance will not be as effective as was anticipated.

Point of View 2

Congress and the President have signed into law a governance-health insurance plan that does not compel individuals to purchase insurance. The private health insurance market is to be continued, but it will be restructured and reformed. Individuals will be able to purchase insurance on their own or through cooperatives. Congress and the President will continue to monitor the health care system to ensure that it is operating efficiently and fairly.

Possible Negative Consequences

The potential tax on those who do not purchase health insurance will not be rescinded.

Point of View 3

Congress and the President have signed into law a governance-health insurance plan that does not compel individuals to purchase insurance. The private health insurance market is to be continued, but it will be restructured and reformed. Individuals will be able to purchase insurance on their own or through cooperatives. Congress and the President will continue to monitor the health care system to ensure that it is operating efficiently and fairly.

Possible Negative Consequences

The potential tax on those who do not purchase health insurance will be rescinded.

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Congress and the President have signed into law a governance-health insurance plan that does not compel individuals to purchase insurance. The private health insurance market is to be continued, but it will be restructured and reformed. Individuals will be able to purchase insurance on their own or through cooperatives. Congress and the President will continue to monitor the health care system to ensure that it is operating efficiently and fairly.

Possible Negative Consequences

The potential tax on those who do not purchase health insurance will not be rescinded.

Option 1

Write your own Compromise Statement: Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?

DEBRIEFING: COMPROMISE STATEMENT

For their Compromise Statement, encourage the class to synthesize the points of view and to incorporate values from each of the perspectives. The idea is for students to create a statement that represents a compromise between two or more of the perspectives.

Possible Compromise Statements

Congress and the President would like to make sure that every American has affordable health insurance. The private health insurance market is to be continued, but it will be restructured and reformed. Individuals will be able to purchase insurance on their own or through cooperatives. Congress and the President will continue to monitor the health care system to ensure that it is operating efficiently and fairly.

DELIBERATION

1. Review the four Points of View. For each Point of View, what is the most serious potential consequence? What compromises are supporters of each of the Points of View willing to make?

DELIBERATION

2. Discuss the following questions: What are the benefits of deliberation? What are the drawbacks of deliberation? Do you think that deliberation is a good idea or a bad idea? Why?

DELIBERATION

3. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

4. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

5. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

6. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

7. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

8. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

9. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

10. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

11. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?

DELIBERATION

12. What are your ideas about how we can make health care more affordable for everyone?
STUDENT HANDOUT 1

ADVICE TO STUDENTS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL DELIBERATION

The National Constitution Center in Philadelphia is one of the most innovative educational institutions in the country. As you work through this exchange, you will learn about the Constitution, its origins, and the role it has played in shaping our country. The Constitution was written and signed during the summer of 1787. The men who came to Philadelphia were charged with writing a new plan for government. They deliberated for four months and created a document that became known as the Constitution. The Constitution was completely rewritten at the Constitutional Convention, and it has been revised and amended over time to reflect the needs and values of our country.

The people who wrote the Constitution had to make some difficult decisions about how to govern the country. They disagreed on many things, but they were able to come to an agreement because they respected each other's ideas and were willing to compromise. This exchange is designed to help you think about these same issues today and to encourage you to have a similar level of respect and willingness to compromise.

In this exchange, you will be asked to consider four different points of view about how to make sure that every American has affordable health insurance. Each point of view has its own strengths and weaknesses, and it is important to consider all of them in order to make a decision that is in the best interest of the country.

We hope that this exchange will help you think critically about the Constitution, its role in our country, and the importance of having an active and engaged citizenry. We encourage you to share your thoughts and ideas with others so that you can learn from each other and work together to find solutions to the challenges we face.

STUDENT HANDOUT 2

INTRODUCTION

1.  Display the Points of View for the class to see.

2.  Ask your students to read each of the Points of View and circle which they support for “Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?” and download the Research Questions.

3.  Have students read each of the four Points of View and circle which they support.

Point of View 1

Congress and the President have proposed a government health insurance plan that would cost much more than private plans. The private health insurance industry has lobbied against the plan, and has stated that it will cause the death of millions of jobs once it is enacted. The Affordable Care Act is a landmark health reform bill that has been passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama.

Point of View 2

Government-run health insurance plans would be more efficient than private plans because they would be able to negotiate lower prices for health care services. The private health insurance industry is a major contributor to political campaigns, and it is likely that they would use their influence to increase the cost of health care.

Point of View 3

The private health insurance industry has lobbied against the plan, and has stated that it will cause the death of millions of jobs once it is enacted. The Affordable Care Act is a landmark health reform bill that has been passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama.

Point of View 4

Government-run health insurance plans would be more efficient than private plans because they would be able to negotiate lower prices for health care services. The private health insurance industry is a major contributor to political campaigns, and it is likely that they would use their influence to increase the cost of health care.

STUDENT HANDOUT 3

STUDENT WORKSHEET

1. How is the issue of health care affordable or not affordable to you? What is the reason?

2. List five values that make you believe the issue of health care is affordable or not affordable.

3. In your opinion, what are the main potential consequences of each Point of View?

4. What values do the Points of View have in common?

5. What compromises are supporters of each of the Points of View willing to make?

6. What values do the Points of View have in common?

7. What compromises are supporters of each of the Points of View willing to make?

8. What values do the Points of View have in common?

9. What compromises are supporters of each of the Points of View willing to make?

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12. What values do the Points of View have in common?

13. What compromises are supporters of each of the Points of View willing to make?
The Congress shall have Power To...provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

BE HEARD
democracy that protects the freedoms enshrined in our Constitution is in the hands of the people.

In a deliberation it is important to consider the basic values that should be upheld by everyone. By considering a variety of perspectives, you will be able to think critically about the implications of various points of view.

The U.S. Constitution is one of our nation's founding documents. We look to it to understand the supreme law of the land and to guide our decision-making as a nation. The Constitution states that the government has certain powers that are necessary to carry out its functions. These powers are listed in Article I, Section 8, Clause 1.

The Constitution

The Constitution is a marketplace of ideas where students can exchange and evaluate multiple points of view on the issue of health care reform. Students will be able to evaluate multiple points of view on the issue of health care reform from different points of view. Then, through deliberation, they will find common ground between those who have differing perspectives. Students will be able to understand how the Constitution is a living document that evolves with the times.

The National Constitution Center is located in Philadelphia, just a few hundred yards from Independence Hall where the Constitutional Convention took place. The Center is a marketplace of ideas where students can exchange and evaluate multiple points of view on the issue of health care reform. Students will be able to understand how the Constitution is a living document that evolves with the times.

The rising cost of health care has compelled some employers to drop coverage for their employees. Many Americans will remain uninsured or underinsured because they cannot afford health insurance. Congress and the President should leave the current system alone. Most Americans are insured and content with the care they are receiving, and they want to keep what they have, rather than support a government-run plan that would cost over $1 trillion over the next ten years. Millions more Americans are expected to go without insurance; and outside of what they are receiving for health care, they have no opportunity to be heard.

The Blue Dog Coalition

We also believe health care reform must preserve patient choice of provider and maintain competition within the marketplace that protects consumers and provides them with choices among quality, affordable health care plans. Insurers will no longer be able to exclude individuals from coverage based on pre-existing conditions and will be prevented from selectively refusing to renew policies in an actuarial neutral system in 10 years; millions more Americans are expected to go without insurance; and outside of what they are receiving for health care, they have no opportunity to be heard.

The Blue Dog Coalition

The advice presented has been created to provide sound advice and help students both come to a better understanding of the issue and the claims that are made on both sides. The advice begins by summarizing the main arguments and challenges, followed by detailed analysis and discussion of each point. The overview is followed by a more detailed analysis of the legal, economic, and ethical implications of each point. The analysis is followed by a discussion of the implications of the point for the future of health care reform. The analysis is followed by a discussion of the implications of the point for the future of health care reform.

STUDENT HANDOUT 1

STUDENT HANDOUT 2
**STUDENT HANDOUT 1**

**ADVICE TO STUDENTS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL DELIBERATION**


The Constitution is the fundamental law of our land and the source of our government’s power. It guarantees the rights of all Americans and sets limits on what the government can do. The Constitution was written by a group of men who were debating how to create a government that would be strong enough to protect the nation but also respect the rights of citizens. They had to agree on a plan that would work for a diverse nation with different interests. The process of creating the Constitution is as important as the Constitution itself.

The Exchange is a program that gives students a chance to learn about the Constitution and to participate in a conversation about its meaning and importance. The Exchange is open to all students, and it is free of charge. The Exchange allows you to develop the skills you need to be active citizens, including the ability to think critically, to reason logically, to communicate effectively, and to work collaboratively. The Exchange is a place to explore the Constitution, to ask questions, and to engage in thoughtful discussion.

The Exchange is a dynamic way for high school students to discover how their peers in their classroom and high school students across the nation are thinking about and discussing the Constitution. The Exchange is a place to learn about the Constitution, to be challenged by different perspectives, and to contribute your own ideas.

**QUOTES TO CONSIDER**

Here is an excerpt from a speech by Representative Henry Waxman. "The rising cost of health care has compelled some employers to drop coverage for their employees. Some of the uninsured have chosen not to carry health insurance. The high quality of medical treatment and medications in the U.S. are due to advanced health savings accounts and would be guaranteed access to any plan offered in the United States, including low-premium, high-quality health plans." -- Representative Henry Waxman

Here is an excerpt from a speech by Senator Mitch McConnell. "A government-run plan would cost over $1 trillion over the next ten years. Congress and the President should agree on a government-run health insurance plan that would compete with private ones on cost. The private insurance companies would be required to compete with the government-run plan in order to stay in business. Everyone would be assured coverage, and the government would control the health care system, radically changing the way Americans choose health care plans." -- Senator Mitch McConnell

**STUDENT HANDOUT 2**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Address**

**Date**

**Class**

**Subject Area**

**Materials:**

**Preparatory Questions**

**About This Issue**

This program will engage students through a series of role-playing activities designed by the Constitution Center to help students understand the Constitution. The role-playing activities allow students to explore the values of the Constitution and to think about how these values have influenced our nation’s history.

**The Constitution**

**Section 10**

The Congress shall have power to provide for the common Defense and general welfare of the United States.

**Section 8**

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, and on the profits of corporations, and to pay the debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but no tax shall be laid which shall in any manner impair the credit of the United States, or be so excessive as to be unreasonably burdensome.

**Student Handout 3**

**DEBRIEFING**

**DEBRIEFING:** COMPROMISE STATEMENT

A. What values are evident in each Point of View?

B. What tensions or conflicts exist between the Points of View?

C. What values do the Points of View have in common?

D. What consequences of each Point of View are most serious and potentially negative?

**RECOMMENDING STATEMENT**

The Exchange is a dynamic way for high school students to discover how their peers in their classroom and high school students across the nation are thinking about and discussing the Constitution. The Exchange is a place to learn about the Constitution, to be challenged by different perspectives, and to contribute your own ideas.

**STUDENT WORKSHEET**

1. How do the laws of health care affect or impact you or your family?
2. How do you think about the health care system?
3. What policies or changes would you like to see in the current health care system?
4. What are your reasons for wanting these changes?
5. How do you think the government should improve the health care system?
6. What actions can you take to improve the health care system?
The Constitution
Article I, Section 8, Clause 1
The Congress shall have Power To...

The Congress shall have Power To... provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States;...
THE CONSTITUTION

Advisory Board: Section II: Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to... provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

To learn more, visit the National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution at: http://www.constitutioncenter.org/exchange

THE CONSTITUTION

Advisory Board: Section II: Clause 2: The Congress shall have Power to... provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States.

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INTRODUCTION

Point of View 1

Governors and the Federal government sign on to a government health insurance plan that does not accept private-sector plans. The private insurance companies try to compete. Patients are insured by the government plan and pay their premiums. The Federal government helps the patients pay their co-pays and deductibles. The private insurance companies try to compete.

Potential Regional Successes

All you need to get involved in... are the private insurance companies. They have the incentive to compete. The private insurance companies have the incentive to compete. They also have the incentive to compete.

Potential Regional Successes

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We the People

The Constitution

DEBRIEFING: COMPROMISE STATEMENT

C. What values do the Points of View have in common?

Debate the compromises that you might have to make to arrive at your own position. Write down four to six compromises in the margin of your handout.

Q:  Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?

Q:  Should the government require individuals to purchase health insurance?

Q:  Should the government provide public health services such as Medicare and Medicaid?

Q:  Should the government take over the role of the current health insurance market?

5. Pass out Student Handout 2. Have students read each of the four Points of View and circle which they support or share any other potential consequences you may have identified.

DEBATING COMPROMISSStatement, and thoughts of how their peers in their classroom and beyond are thinking about the issue. The Exchange is a dynamic way for high school students to discover how their peers in their classroom and beyond are thinking about the issue.

Q:  Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?

STUDENT HANDOUT 1

STUDENT HANDOUT 2

STUDENT HANDOUT 3

STUDENT WORKSHEET

1. The idea of health care affects you or your family?

Q:  Should the government make sure that every American has affordable health insurance?

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