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NEWS

U.S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS

FROM:

SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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BUSH HEALTH CARE PLAN

**PRESIDENT'S FREE-MARKET PLAN ADDRESSES MAJOR PROBLEMS;
CRITICS PRESCRIBE GRIDLOCK, INVITE 'LEGISLATIVE MALPRACTICE' SUIT**

SOME OF US HAVE BEEN SAYING FOR A LONG TIME THAT HEALTH CARE WOULD BE ONE OF THE TOP ISSUES FOR 1992. I THINK WE CAN COUNT ON THAT, NOW THAT PRESIDENT BUSH HAS DELIVERED ON HIS PROMISE TO PROPOSE A MAJOR HEALTH CARE REFORM PACKAGE.

"PAY OR PLAY" PUTS BUSINESSES ON CRITICAL LIST

THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL DEMONSTRATES THAT WE CAN ADDRESS THE ACCESS AND COST CONCERNS OF ALL AMERICANS WITHOUT CRIPPLING OUR ECONOMY, AND WITHOUT PUTTING OUR EMPLOYERS ON THE CRITICAL LIST, AS THE "PAY OR PLAY" CROWD WOULD HAVE IT.

WHAT THE "PAY OR PLAY" PROPONENTS DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND IS THAT SMALL BUSINESSES DO WANT TO PROVIDE HEALTH INSURANCE TO THEIR EMPLOYEES. THEY JUST NEED A LITTLE HELP TO DO IT. WE CAN HELP LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME AMERICANS BUY INSURANCE ON THE FREE MARKET, AS THE PRESIDENT HAS PROPOSED, OR WE CAN BURY OUR BUSINESSES UNDER A MOUNTAIN OF NEW MANDATES. AMERICANS WANT AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE, BUT THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE TO PAY FOR IT WITH THEIR JOBS.

GRIDLOCK & LEGISLATIVE MALPRACTICE

IT DIDN'T TAKE THE PRESIDENT'S OPPONENTS LONG TO OFFER THEIR TABLESPOON OF CRITICISM. SOME OF THESE FOLKS ARE RUNNING AROUND TODAY LIKE THEY'VE JUST DISCOVERED THE HEALTH CARE ISSUE, AND THEY'RE THE ONLY ONES WHO CAN SAVE US NOW. WELL, THE CRITICS' RHETORIC IS NOTHING BUT A PRESCRIPTION FOR LEGISLATIVE GRIDLOCK.

IF YOU ASK ME, THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE SICK AND TIRED OF CONGRESSIONAL INACTION, AND OUGHT TO SUE US FOR LEGISLATIVE MALPRACTICE IF WE CAN'T WORK ON A BIPARTISAN BASIS TO REFORM AMERICAN HEALTH CARE.

PRESERVING STRENGTHS; ATTACKING WEAKNESSES

NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, WE HAVE OUR WORK CUT OUT FOR US, AND NO ONE EVER SAID THE SOLUTIONS WOULD BE EASY.

BUT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD BE COMMENDED -- NOT ONLY FOR PROPOSING A PLAN THAT ADDRESSES MANY OF THE DEFICIENCIES OF OUR CURRENT DELIVERY SYSTEM, BUT FOR PROPOSING A PLAN THAT PRESERVES THE MANY STRENGTHS THAT OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM OFFERS.

WE ALL AGREE THAT \$800 BILLION PER YEAR IS TOO MUCH TO SPEND ON HEALTH CARE DELIVERY, PARTICULARLY WHEN SO MANY STILL LACK ACCESS TO CARE.

WE ALSO AGREE THAT 37 MILLION INDIVIDUALS WITHOUT INSURANCE IS FAR TOO MANY.

BY HELPING INDIVIDUALS PURCHASE HEALTH INSURANCE WITH TAX CREDITS, BY CURBING THE EXPLOSIVE COSTS OF MEDICAL MALPRACTICE, AND BY HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES TO PROVIDE COVERAGE FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES, PRESIDENT BUSH HAS GONE A LONG WAY TOWARDS ADDRESSING OUR HEALTH SYSTEM'S MAJOR PROBLEMS.

AND LET'S NOT FORGET THAT AMERICA IS THE MEDICAL MIRACLE WORKER. WE ARE LIVING LONGER THAN EVER BEFORE. WE'VE DEFEATED PLAGUES; WE HAVE MADE MEDICAL ADVANCES THAT CAN SAVE THE LIFE OF EVEN THE SMALLEST, FRAILEST NEWBORN; AND WE HAVE LEARNED HOW TO MAKE SPARE PARTS FOR NEARLY EVERY BODY ORGAN. THE QUALITY OF HEALTH CARE THAT OUR PROFESSIONALS DELIVER IS ENVIED AND ADMIRERD WORLD WIDE, AND IS SECOND TO NONE.

PEOPLE DEMANDING ACTION

BUT THERE ARE PROBLEMS, AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE DEMANDING ACTION. WE OWE IT TO THEM TO WORK TOGETHER, WITH THE PRESIDENT, TO PROVIDE ALL AMERICANS WITH THE QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE THEY DESERVE.

I LOOK FORWARD TO A VIGOROUS DEBATE IN THE WEEKS AND MONTHS AHEAD. LET'S HOPE IT DOESN'T DISINTEGRATE INTO A POLITICAL CONTEST TO SEE WHO CAN SPEND THE MOST, TALK THE MOST AND CLAIM THEY CARE THE MOST. WE'VE ALREADY BEEN THROUGH ALL THAT NONSENSE -- IT'S TIME FOR SOME SERIOUS WORK, AND SOME RESULTS FOR A CHANGE.

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