



Moseley Braun pushes single-payer health system

By Kate McCann 11/4/03

DURHAM – In a rare New Hampshire campaign stop, former Sen. Carol Moseley Braun told a University of New Hampshire audience that a single-payer health-care system is the key to fixing a troubled system and taming its rising costs.

Speaking at the presidential primary forum Every Child Matters, Moseley Braun also said health insurance should be paid through income taxes rather than payroll taxes to lessen the burden on working people.

“We need to reform the health care system,” Moseley Braun said. “Tinkering with it is only a half-step that won’t get us there.”

She said measures like these would reduce the burden of health care costs on employers, who raise prices on consumer products to pay for their employees’ coverage.

It is those higher prices that drive Americans to purchase foreign goods, she said, which causes the loss of more U.S. jobs to overseas markets.

Single-payer systems would put doctors and patients in control by using privately delivered health care that is publicly financed.

Like Moseley Braun, presidential hopeful Rep. Dennis Kucinich, D-Ohio, favors the single-payer system. Kucinich used the same forum to criticize his Democratic rivals’ plans.

He said the other candidates want health insurance for every child or every American, but they are afraid to challenge the insurance companies and completely remodel the system.

“Everyone should have health insurance? Listen carefully,” Kucinich said. “I say everyone should have health care. I’m not selling insurance.”

Kucinich said one reason he advocates a single-payer system is because health care should not be a system that allows advertising agencies and big corporations to profit.

He said his plan would cost the same amount of money health care costs now, \$1.4 trillion, but employers would pay less for their employees.

Rep. Dick Gephardt, D-Mo., told the forum that he is the only presidential candidate with a health-care plan that covers everyone.

When children are not covered, overall costs increase because

the cost of their health care turns up on everyone’s insurance bill, Gephardt said.

He said the best way to combat this problem is to ensure their parents are covered.

If elected, Gephardt said the federal government would pay 60 percent of every company’s employee health care plan and 60 percent for public employees of every state and local government. The coverage would increase to 65 percent for the unemployed.

He said it would apply to part-time and full-time workers, and retirees.

The Missouri congressman says his plan will give the average family two to \$3,000 more a year – more than double what they received from President Bush’s tax cut.

Gephardt would eliminate those tax cuts to fund his \$60 billion plan.

“If you like George Bush’s tax cuts, vote for George Bush,” Gephardt said. “If you want a different kind of health care where everybody has health insurance in this country and it can never be taken away from you, then vote for me.”