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**With health care costs rising far faster than inflation and approximately ten percent of Americans uninsured, health care reform is crucial.** Even while we address these challenges, Americans continue to benefit from the highest quality of care and the most helpful medical innovations in the world.

As we consider changes to the health care system, Congressman Akin believes that we must target reforms that reduce the cost of care and help people access insurance when they need it most. We must fix what is broken in our system – without breaking what works.

Congressman Akin is committed to sensible, patient-centered reforms in our health care system. While the majority is focused on the notion of universal health care coverage, coverage itself is no guarantee that a patient will have access to care when they need it. In practice, “universal coverage” places crucial decisions in the hands of government bureaucrats: decisions about what medical care is available, when, and to whom. Such a system would become similar to European socialized medicine, where the quality of health care has been undermined even as costs have skyrocketed.

Instead, all Americans should have access to health care coverage that works for them: without the government dictating price or plan specifications.

There are several steps that will improve health care access and reduce costs without undermining the quality of care that we expect as Americans. In the 112th Congress, Congressman Akin co-sponsored H.R. 2, legislation repealing the federal health insurance mandates enacted in 2010. He has also advocated defunding the enforcement of these mandates. In the last Congress, Congressman Akin co-sponsored H.R. 3400 to reform the U.S. health care system in a way that respects individual patient choices ( [see more information on health care legislation in the 111th Congress](#) )

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Government run health care leads to increased costs, lower quality of care, bureaucratic rationing and inefficient allocation of resources. Yet by fine tuning our current system while respecting the power of individual choice, we can reduce costs and be prepared for a new generation of innovation in medicine. Patient centered health care reforms like these can accomplish that goal.

## The Principles of Good Health Care Legislation

These principles guide Congressman Akin as he evaluates health care policy and related legislation.

- Promotes the doctor-patient relationship and ensures that the patient has a medical advocate.
- Encourages medical decisions be made by the patient based on medical necessity rather than rationing by a bureaucrat.
- Encourages patients to practice healthy lifestyles. Such practices can be implemented through education and financial incentives.
- Encourages the implementation of electronic medical records that are interoperable and portable while ensuring that the patient's medical history is kept confidential and not released without the patient's consent.
- Encourages transparency of medical costs and quality so that patients have an incentive to "price shop" in the health care market.
- Prohibits any particular entity, government or private, from obtaining a monopoly of medical services in any given market. Due to a lack of competition, monopolies have no incentives to be efficient, adapt new technology, or restructure.
- If an individual is currently insured, they cannot be dropped by a health insurance company due to a pre-existing condition.
- Health care providers would be paid based on the value of service, not the volume of procedures performed.
- Provides tax incentives to encourage patients to obtain catastrophic insurance.
- Encourages health insurance to be portable from job to job, and allow people to be able to get the same tax break when they buy insurance on their own as they do when they get coverage at work.
- Encourages preventive care through regular exams and check-ups. Turns illegal immigrants who have received free medical treatment over to the Department of Homeland

Security (DHS).

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