

## **Families USA/FAH announce Health Care 2008: Presidential Candidate Forums**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Two of Washington, DC’s most prominent health policy organizations announced today that they are organizing “Health Care 2008: Presidential Candidate Forums” – a series of Presidential Forums that will allow each Presidential candidate to discuss in detail his or her vision about health reform and the uninsured with a panel of leading health journalists from “The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer,” ABC News, National Public Radio, and The Wall Street Journal.

The Forums are being organized by Families USA and the Federation of American Hospitals, produced by MacNeil-Lehrer Productions and hosted by the Kaiser Family Foundation in its Barbara Jordan Conference Center. The Foundation’s health news and information site, [kaisernetwork.org](http://kaisernetwork.org), will webcast each forum live and archive them for viewing.

Seating is extremely limited and is restricted to invited guests and members of the media.

The first Forum will take place on Monday, September 24th at 11am ET and will feature former Senator John Edwards (D-NC). The remaining Forums will take place through the end of the year.

“Not since 1992 has there been such a focus in the Presidential campaign on health care,” remarked Chip Kahn, President of the Federation of American Hospitals. “These Forums will provide what I predict will be the campaign’s best conversation with the candidates on health care. They should enable Americans to thoroughly assess each candidate’s vision for our health care future.”

"Health care is the top domestic issue for America's voters, and the forums will enable the public to understand the different approaches presidential candidates bring to this growing concern," said Ron Pollack, Executive Director of Families USA. "Rather than brief and meaningless sound bites, the forums will allow the candidates to explain how America's health care system will change if they are elected in 2008."

"We know from our Kaiser tracking poll that health care ranks as the number one domestic issue Democrats, Republicans, and independents want to hear the candidates talk about," said Drew Altman, president and chief executive officer of the Kaiser Family Foundation. "These forums can make a meaningful contribution to understanding the views of the candidates in depth, and we are pleased to be able to bring them live to people around the country through our health news and information service, [kaisernetwork.org](http://kaisernetwork.org)."

The Forums are being funded by The California Endowment of Los Angeles, California and the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City, Missouri.

Each Forum will be structured identically, last exactly one hour, and feature just one candidate. After introductions, candidates will be asked an initial question, followed by two to three follow-up questions, after which each will have five minutes to present his or her views about health reform. During the remaining time, each candidate will respond to questions from an on-stage panel of four of the nation’s most distinguished journalists with expertise in health policy.

The members of the media panel are Susan Dentzer of “The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer” (PBS) (moderator); Julie Rovner of National Public Radio; Laurie McGinley of The Wall Street Journal; and Timothy Johnson, M.D., of ABC News. During the Forums, only the on-stage media panel will ask questions of the candidates.

Families USA and the Federation of American Hospitals have extended invitations to participate to all of the Presidential candidates from both major parties. Scheduling for the Forums is based upon the availability of each candidate. As of September 19, 2007, the following candidates are confirmed:

September 24	11 am	Sen. John Edwards (D)
October 25	8:30 am	Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH)
October 25	11:30 am	Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE)
October 31	10 am	Sen. John McCain (R-AZ)
November 1	11 am	Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-CT)
TBD	TBD	Sen. Hillary Clinton (D-NY)
TBD	TBD	Gov. Mike Huckabee (R)
TBD	TBD	Gov. Bill Richardson (D-NM)
TBD	TBD	Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX)

Additional information is available electronically at a website developed by the Kaiser Family Foundation for the Forum series. The URL is: <http://presidentialforums.health08.org>.