

**COMPARISON OF BUSH AND KERRY POSITIONS ON HEALTH BENEFITS ISSUES**

	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Kerry</b>
<b>Uninsured</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tax credits for small-employer contributions to HSAs applied to first \$500 for family coverage and \$200 for individual coverage</li> <li>• For low income families, a \$1,000 HSA contribution and a \$2,000 refundable tax credit to purchase a qualified high deductible health plan</li> <li>• State purchasing pools to simplify and reduce the cost of buying individual insurance</li> <li>• National marketplace for individuals to shop for health insurance</li> <li>• Association Health Plans (AHPs)</li> <li>• Expanded Community Health Centers (CHCs)</li> <li>• Expanded effort to enroll children in State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and Medicaid</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% funding for SCHIP</li> <li>• Allow individuals and employees from small firms to enroll in the Federal Employee Health Benefit Plans (FEHBP)</li> <li>• 75% Federal reimbursement for catastrophic costs (above \$50,000) for participants in group health plans</li> <li>• Tax credits for small employers to purchase health insurance (if they do not take a tax deduction for benefits costs)</li> </ul>
<b>Medicare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue implementation of the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003 (MMA) as enacted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have drug benefit administered by Medicare, not private plans</li> <li>• Lower additional funding for Medicare Advantage (MA) plans</li> <li>• Require HHS Secretary to negotiate best payment level for Medicare purchase of prescription drugs</li> <li>• Eliminate Medicare competitive bidding demonstration project</li> <li>• Overhaul MMA to “ensure seniors are not forced into HMOs”</li> </ul>
<b>Liability Reform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal medical liability reform, including caps on damages</li> <li>• Maintain federal preemption of state laws for coverage decisions (Patients’ Bill of Rights legislation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal medical liability reform, without caps on damages</li> <li>• Allow state laws to apply to coverage decisions (Patients’ Bill of Rights legislation)</li> </ul>

<b>Quality Improvements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased Federal funding for demonstration project to achieve 10 year goal of personal electronic health records for patients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce costs and improve quality by ensuring electronic paperless claims</li> </ul>
<b>Prescription Drugs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain current law FDA controls over importation of drugs</li> <li>• Lower Medicare reimbursement for high-priced cancer drugs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow reimportation of drugs from Canada and other countries</li> <li>• Require disclosure of Pharmaceutical Benefits Manager (PBM) discounts</li> <li>• Allow generic drugs to get to market faster</li> <li>• See also Kerry positions on Medicare drug benefit above</li> </ul>
<b>Mental Health Parity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited expansion or continuation of current law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad expansion of current law (Domenici-Kennedy bill)</li> </ul>