

May 13, 2009

*The Fires are It, Now Fan the Flames*

## **A Populist Health Care Rebellion**

By KEVIN ZEESE

**L**ast week when I was one of the Baucus Eight, so-named because eight of us were arrested before Sen. Baucus, I hoped others would join us. Yesterday, they did. And, the single payer movement grew stronger.

Before the hearing I joined nearly 50 people in a spirited protest outside the U.S. senate letting all who entered know we wanted a single payer national health care plan.

And, inside there were a series of protests.

As the hearing began, and Sen. Baucus was speaking a group of about 30 nurses, dressed in their red hospital uniforms, stood up and turned their backs on Baucus. They had pinned to their backs: "Nurses Say: Stop AHIP. Pass Single Payer." (AHIP is America's Health Insurance Plans – the health insurance industry lobby.)

The nurses left the room to applause.

Then doctors, nurses and advocates stood up and one by one and spoke directly to Senator Baucus.

DeAnn McEwen, a registered nurse from California said: "Today is Florence Nightingale's birthday. Florence Nightingale said if there were none to hope for any better, there would never be any better. This country needs a single payer health care

system.”

Then, another RN from California stood up: “People at the table have failed Americans for 30 years. We want single payer at the table. We want guaranteed health care so we can give the care we need, when we need to give it.”

She was followed by Dr. Judy Dasovich of Springfield, Missouri, who said “We request that single payer advocates be allowed at the table. Health care should be for patients not for profits.”

Dr. Steven Fenichel of Ocean City, NJ followed adding: “It’s a sense of outrage that brings me to your Senate chambers today. These people were entrusted by the American people to serve the American people’s interests. And they are just serving the interests of the insurance companies and drug companies – the people be damned.”

Jerry Call, a member of Physicians for a National Health Program from South Thomaston, Maine was the final advocate from the audience, speaking for the majority of Americans shut out from the discussion, and saying: “Sixty percent of Americans and sixty percent of physicians want single payer. Why aren’t sixty percent of the people up front not single payer representatives?”

All five were arrested and taken away for booking. They were charged with Disruption of Congress, the same offense I will go to court for on May 26th.

Now, 13 have been arrested – the Baucus 8 have morphed into the Baucus 13 – demanding a seat at the table; merely urging that the most popular health reform among the people as well as among doctors, nurses and economists be part of the conversation.

Outside as each new Baucus criminal was walked before the crowd, now approximately 75 people -- they were all cheered.

These are the democracy heroes. These are the types of people that change the equation from money and profits to people and

human rights.

Tomorrow, there will be a march to the senate, a rally and an afternoon of nearly 1,000 people lobbying for real health care reform. An end to corporate insurance profiting from illness and not allowing doctors to practice medicine and nurses to care for patients.

We have lit a fire, now we must fan the flame into a populist movement that breaks the corporate stranglehold in Washington, DC. The people need to be organized, persistent and insistent. We need to grow the single payer movement so it cannot be ignored.

More:

[Visit ProsperityAgenda.US](http://www.ProspertyAgenda.US) and join in efforts for single payer.

For a series of photos showing nurses and doctors being arrested in protest for single payer health care click the link below:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/16992253@N06/3526172446/>

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