

GOP OFFER HEALTHCARE TO ALL THOSE WITHOUT PRE- EXISTING CONDITIONS

According to the LAT, the GOP presidential candidates have come up with a brilliant way of offering insurance to the uninsured: leave out those with pre-existing conditions, including people with medical histories just like the candidates' themselves.

When Rudolph W. Giuliani was diagnosed with prostate cancer in the spring of 2000, one thing he did not have to worry about was a lack of medical insurance.

Today, the former New York mayor joins two other cancer survivors in seeking the Republican presidential nomination: Arizona Sen. John McCain has been treated for melanoma, the most serious type of skin malignancy, and former Tennessee Sen. Fred Thompson had lymphoma, a cancer of the immune system.

All three have offered proposals with the stated aim of helping the 47 million people in the U.S. who have no health insurance, including those with preexisting medical conditions.

But under the plans all three have put forward, cancer survivors such as themselves could not be sure of getting coverage – especially if they were not already covered by a government or job-related plan and had to seek insurance as individuals.

"Unless it's in a state that has very strong consumer protections, they would likely be denied coverage," said economist Paul Fronstin of the Employee Benefit Research Institute, who has

reviewed the candidates' proposals.
"People with preexisting conditions
would not be able to get coverage or
would not be able to afford it."

I was drawn to the article because I'm one of
those the article explains would be denied
health care coverage in almost all cases.

An expert with access to a manual that
insurers use to make coverage decisions
said that most companies wouldn't
consider a cancer survivor for 10 years,
with some exceptions, and then would
only issue a policy at a higher premium.

Nice to know I can always escape to Ireland if I
lose my healthcare.

But in reading it, I wanted to recommend it
because it is really the kind of coverage we
need for a presidential election. It is
informative, explaining in several different
ways why and how cancer survivors cannot find
affordable healthcare. It tells voters—in terms
that put the voter at the center of the
debate—information critical to assessing the
candidates. And it's a great story, using the
cancer history of three leading candidates to
emphasize the gaps in their plans.

It's so rare we see good reporting on the
presidential race, this article deserves
attention.

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