

THE MAX BAUCUS WELLPOINT/LIZ FOWLER PLAN



All this time I've been calling Max Tax health care Max Baucus' health care plan.

But, as William Ockham points out, it's actually Liz Fowler's health care plan (if you open the document and look under document properties, it lists her as author). At one level, it's not surprising that Bad Max's Senior Counsel would have authored the Max Tax plan. Here's how Politico described her role in Bad Max's health care plan earlier this year:

If you drew an organizational chart of major players in the Senate health care negotiations, Fowler would be the chief operating officer.

As a senior aide to Baucus, she directs the Finance Committee health care staff, enforces deadlines on drafting bill language and coordinates with the White House and other lawmakers. She also troubleshoots, identifying policy and political problems before they ripen.

"My job is to get from point A to point B," said Fowler, who's training for four triathlons this summer in between her long days on Capitol Hill.

Fowler learned as a sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania that the United States was the only industrialized country without universal health care, and she decided then to dedicate her professional life to the work.

She first worked for Baucus from 2001 through 2005, playing a key role in negotiating the Medicare Part D

prescription drug program. Feeling burned out, she left for the private sector but rejoined Baucus in 2008, sensing that a Democratic-controlled Congress would make progress on overhauling the health care system.

Baucus and Fowler spent a year putting the senator in a position to pursue reform, including holding hearings last summer and issuing a white paper in November. They deliberately avoided releasing legislation in order to send a signal of openness and avoid early attacks.

“People know when Liz is speaking, she is speaking for Baucus,” said Dean Rosen, the health policy adviser to former Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-Tenn.).

What neither Politico nor Bad Max himself want you to know, though, is that in the two years before she came back to the Senate to help Max craft the Max Tax plan, she worked as VP for Public Policy and External Affairs at WellPoint.

So to the extent that Liz Fowler is the Author of this document, we might as well consider WellPoint its author as well.