

# GRUBER'S RESPONSE: "CONSISTENT" BUT NOT "DISCLOSED"

Ben Smith got a fairly long response from Jonathan Gruber on why he hasn't disclosed the \$392,600 contracts he has had with HHS during the period when he was the chief spokesperson for the Administration's health care plan. He lays out his qualifications and points to some studies addressing the questions I have asked (I'll return to them shortly). The bulk of his response is spent insisting that everything he has said was completely consistent with his beliefs (which, if I remember correctly, is just what Armstrong Williams had to say).

Moreover, at no time have I publicly advocated a position that I did not firmly believe – indeed, I have been completely consistent with my academic track record. On the two issues this article raises:

But that, of course, wasn't the point. I don't doubt he believes all this stuff. But why didn't he disclose it? Here's what he says about that.

Gruber told POLITICO that he has told reporters of the contract "whenever they asked" and noted that he formally disclosed that "I am a paid consultant to the Obama Administration" in a form attached to his most recent, December 24 article in the New England Journal of Medicine, though it wasn't widely known by reporters on the beat.

So, nine months after he first gets a contract with HHS, he starts disclosing the relationship, and only to the organization that can totally discredit him professionally, not to those that will more directly affect the health care debate? Gruber was first put under contract in

March of last year—\$95,000 to promote “the President’s” plan—and the received another \$297,600 in June. Why no disclosure then? And why—after he decided he ought to start disclosing this stuff—did he not disclose it in a December 28 op-ed in the WaPo?