



Diverse Coalition Working Toward Health Reform Consensus

by [Richard Gephardt](#)

Fri Jan 30, 2009 at 02:17:13 PM PST

While it may not sell newspapers or light up the ratings on cable shout shows, a diverse group of interests has quietly moved toward consensus on the need for significant health reform this year. This development is all the more remarkable because many of the groups now working together have disagreed on health reform for decades.

I have been working to reform America's health care policy since before the Clinton presidency and I am encouraged that leaders such as Terry O'Sullivan, general president of the Laborers' International Union of North American, PhRMA's Billy Tauzin and Becky Patton of the American Nurses Association are sitting down together to have a constructive dialogue about what the new president and the new congress must do to ensure health reform becomes a top domestic priority.

These principals and others gathered for the first in a series of [Summit Conversations sponsored by America's Agenda: Health Care Education Fund](#) at the University of Miami on January 28th. This event was hosted by University of Miami President and [former Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna Shalala](#).

Americans are demanding high quality health care they can afford and that is what the Obama administration has promised. But there can be no reform without consensus and these Summit Conversations aim to highlight and explore this emerging consensus. Done correctly, this can be the year that America finally makes quality, affordable health care a priority for all.

<http://www.dailykos.com/storyonly/2009/1/30/17828/8398/481/691073>