

America's health care system suffers from widely acknowledged flaws. Costs are already high and are continuing to rise while more than 46 million Americans lack health insurance and millions more have inadequate coverage. Many were hopeful in early 2009 when President Obama and Democrats and Republicans in Congress promised health reform that would contain costs and expand access. But after a year of debate, reform is on life support and many Americans are confused, anxious, and angry at the direction of the debate in Washington.

One of Washington's longtime health reform leaders, **Judy Feder**, discussed the rationale, policy proposals, and shortfalls of the reform package developed by congressional Democrats. **Stephen Parente**, a University of Minnesota faculty and advisor to Senator John McCain's 2008 presidential campaign, provided comments and reactions.



### **JUDY FEDER**

Judy Feder is Professor of Public Policy at Georgetown University where she was Dean of the Public Policy Institute from 1999 through 2008. Judy is one of the nation's leaders in health policy – particularly in efforts to understand and improve the U.S health insurance system. A widely published scholar, her expertise on health insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, and long-term care is regularly drawn upon by members of Congress, executive officials, and the national media. Judy has also held leadership policy positions. As staff director of the congressional Pepper Commission – chaired by Sen. John D. Rockefeller IV (D-WV) – she is widely credited with setting the stage for the health reform debate of the 1990s.

During former President Bill Clinton's first term, she served as principal deputy assistant secretary for planning and evaluation in the Department of Health and Human Services, where she worked to expand health insurance coverage, effectively manage Medicare and Medicaid, and assure the safety of food and drugs. She is an elected member of the Institute of Medicine, the National Academy of Public Administration, and the National Academy of Social Insurance; a former chair and board member of AcademyHealth; a member of the Center for American Progress Action Fund board, the Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellowships Program Advisory Board, and the Hamilton Project's Advisory Council; and a senior advisor to the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. Judy is a political scientist, with a B.A. from Brandeis University, and a master's and Ph.D. from Harvard University.

**STEPHEN PARENTE**

Stephen T. Parente is an Associate Professor in the Department of Finance in the Carlson School of Management at University of Minnesota where he specializes in health economics, health insurance, medical technology evaluation and health information technology. He has extensive experience directing empirical analyses utilizing primary and secondary data bases and is acknowledged as a national expert on using administrative databases, particularly Medicare and health insurer data, for health policy research. He holds a doctorate from Johns Hopkins University, and both a Masters of Science in public policy analysis and a Masters of Public Health from the University of Rochester.