

Senate Finance Chairman Says Public Plan Likely in Committee Reform Plan

In comments following the release of a policy options paper released on May 11, 2009, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-MT) has said it is likely that the health care reform plan being drafted in his committee likely will include a public plan option and he believes he can win some Republican support for it. However, he also said that a true single payer plan is "off the table" and that the public plan option could go in any number of directions, including:

- one based on Medicare, paying Medicare rates;
- one administered by private third-party administrators;
- one administered by the states; or
- one offered as a fall back option like the Medicare prescription drug law.

The Senate Finance Committee is expected to begin work on health care reform this month and hopes to offer a reform plan by the August recess.

The AMA continues to update its web site with information about the health care reform debate in Washington, D.C. at: <http://www.ama-assn.org/>.