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Talking points for the August 2009 Congressional Recess

1. **Women have a lot at stake in the campaign for health care reform.** We use health care more than men do, on average, because of pregnancy and our longer lives. We are discriminated against by insurance companies that charge women more than men in some states. And, we often have to arrange health care for our entire families – from kids to spouses to elderly parents and relatives. We're the ones fighting with bureaucrats to get necessary services covered and combing through the fine print of intentionally incomprehensible policies.
2. **The proposals that have emerged from Congress so far represent important steps forward from the system we now have.** If we don't fix our broken health care system, the cost of health insurance will keep on going up and up, and more and more of us will lose our health coverage.
3. **What do we like so far in the House and Senate bills?**
 - a. Insurance companies would not be able to refuse us coverage because of pre-existing conditions, such as breast cancer or diabetes, drop our coverage if we become sick.
 - b. There would be no co-pays for prevention and wellness care and there would be limits on what we have to pay out of pocket for health care.
 - c. There would be no "cost caps" on what insurance companies will pay for our care on a yearly or lifetime basis.
 - d. Insurance companies could not charge women more than men.
 - e. We wouldn't risk losing health insurance if we change jobs or get divorced.
4. **What are we concerned about, as the health reform process moves forward?**
 - a. We want to be sure health insurance coverage is really affordable for our families, especially if we are going to be required to have insurance.
 - b. Congress must keep politics and ideology out of the process of deciding on which health benefits will be included. Reproductive health decisions should be left to women and our families, not to Washington bureaucrats.
 - c. We don't think immigrants should have to wait five years to get health coverage. If they live here as our neighbors, we want them to be healthy!
5. **What do we want when Congress returns from its August recess?** Congress must not delay in finishing its work on health reform this year! Lawmakers must act in September to reconcile differing approaches between the House and Senate and pass a bill that meets the needs of women and our families. The President must keep the pressure on to ensure the job gets done!