

Ensuring Accurate Perceptions of the Health Insurance Industry

May 2007

Setting the Stage: Operating Principles

We have agreed that the industry will soon be under attack and must:

- ✓ **Engage strategically (do not “take the bait”)**
- ✓ **Demonstrate the industry’s commitment to positive reforms**
- ✓ **Focus on how we add value to the system**
- ✓ **Strengthen relationships with stakeholders and build trust**

Situation Analysis: Background

- ***SiCKO*: To be released in the U.S. on June 29, 2007**
- **Run time: 113 minutes**
- **Rating: PG-13**
- **High Profile Debut: Cannes Film Festival**
- **Participation from Significant Hollywood and Washington Resources**
 - Marketed and distributed by: Harvey Weinstein (former CEO of Miramax)
 - Movie's spokesman: Chris Lehane, a former political adviser in the Clinton White House and the 2000 Gore Presidential Campaign

Situation Analysis: Media Coverage

The New York Times

May 22, 2007

**Film Offers New Talking
Points in Health Care Debate**

Los Angeles Times

May 21, 2007

**Michael Moore's Sicko
Confronts American Public**

Bloomberg

May 19, 2007

**Michael Moore's
Sicko Slams U.S.
Health Systems;
Cannes Claps**

AP Associated Press

May 21, 2007

**Michael Moore
Frenzy in Cannes**

- **Coverage has been largely “cinematic”**
 - Majority of the coverage is by movie and entertainment reporters, and reviews have been positive, urging people to see it; “better than Fahrenheit 9/11”
- **Political reporters are beginning to cover the fallout from the movie**
 - e.g., Moore’s investigation by Dept of Treasury for taking people to Cuba
- **The film’s vignettes are getting independent coverage**
 - e.g., 60 Minutes covered the LA case on Sunday, May 20th that resulted in a Kaiser Permanente settlement
- **Sicko is a hit with bloggers**
 - More than 650 bloggers have written about the movie since Moore released the trailers; most reviews are positive

Strategic Approach

I. Move Past Damaging Anecdotes to Common Ground
Take the Issues SiCKO raises “Off the Table”

II. Define the Health Insurance Industry as Part of the
Solution

III. Reframe the Debate:
Highlight Threats and Weaknesses of Government-Run Systems

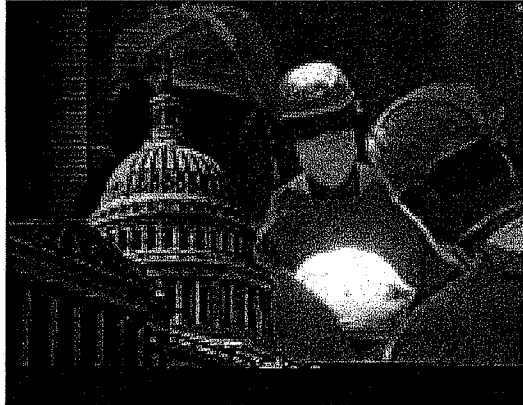
IV. Position SiCKO as a Threat to the Democrats’
Larger Agenda

V. Prepare for the Worst

Strategy I: Move Past Damaging Anecdotes to Common Ground

- **Acknowledge the film's compelling stories and personal tragedy in human terms**
 - Avoid arrogance, defensiveness and debating technicalities
 - Ensure that health insurers, trade groups and spokespersons express sympathy for the individuals profiled in the film
- **Establish appropriate context for SiCKO's human stories**
 - Show the industry's progress since some incidents took place
 - Fact-check the movie's examples and correct the record, if necessary
 - Educate key audiences about the industry's strong track record on:
 - Prompt payment
 - Claim approval
- **Embrace national dialogue on access and quality issues**
 - Redouble engagement in national dialogue about access, quality and affordability
 - Demonstrate in simple terms how health insurance plans are making coverage more affordable and accessible

Strategy II: Define the Health Insurance Industry as Part of the *Solution*



■ Address public cynicism

- Tout industry positions, programs and progress on access, quality and cost
 - Create online “toolkits” that can be customized for policymakers, employers, company employees and the media with briefs on how the industry is proactively and effectively addressing each of these key issues
- Show how the industry is creating incentives to address the largest cost driver in the health care system: preventable and mismanaged chronic disease



Strategy II: Define the Health Insurance Industry as Part of the *Solution* (continued)

- **Moore's Arsenal:**
 - Rescissions
 - Medical underwriting
 - Denial of coverage
 - MLR
 - Profits ahead of patients

- **Can we preempt the movie and announce patient-friendly changes in industry practices? Potential ideas include:**
 - Creating a single point of access to all health insurer independent review boards
 - Embracing positive industry-wide claims and coverage initiatives
 - Creating and publicizing industry-wide initiatives that make the system easier for patients to understand and navigate

Strategy II: Define the Health Insurance Industry as Part of the *Solution* (continued)

- **Highlight the value of managed care**
 - Highlight research and studies that show how managed care helps patients
 - Show how the system controls health care spending
 - Equip company employees with “facts and priorities” to address questions and concerns

- **Raise awareness of independent external review and its role**
 - Media train a group of external reviewers and offer interviews with key media outlets
 - Create and train a team of patients from across the country who have benefited from external review processes and who are willing to tell their story
 - Use paid media to profile review board physicians in DC-based news publications

- **Amplify the industry’s voice around the film’s release – stay focused on the positive story. Put industry spokespeople out front with national media immediately before/after film’s release**
 - Outreach to broadcast and cable TV news
 - Talk radio
 - Brief with key health policy, political and trade reporters
 - Online communications

Strategy II: Define the Health Insurance Industry as Part of the *Solution* (continued)

■ Internal Communications

- Understand that the film – and the attendant media coverage – will be a major source of conversation and frustration for employees of the industry.
- Realize that the film will result in a variety of “whistle blowers” from within company ranks as well as a host of new “victims” coming forward – often prodded by plaintiff lawyers – to tell how they have been wronged by the industry.
- Prepare materials that each company can use or tailor (if it chooses) to communicate with its employees about the film. Focus on the industry’s positive contributions and commitment to patient-friendly reform
 - Don’t spend time debating Moore in the communications
 - **Expect that all communications will appear on Moore’s Website**

Strategy III: Work with Allies to Reframe the Debate

Highlight Threats, Weaknesses of Government-Run Systems

What SiCKO Advocates:

Government-Run Health Care

The Opportunity:

Out-of-Step with Majority of Americans

A Debate We Can Win:

Improving U.S. System Versus
Enacting Government-Run Care

Messenger Credibility is Key:

Focus on Our Reform Proposals While Patients and Allies
Make the Case Against Government-Run Care

Strategy III: Work with Allies to Reframe the Debate

Dispel the Myths

Messages to Highlight How Four Key Failures Harm Patients

Access is Restricted

Access to health coverage does not equal access to health care; many people's health problems and quality of life get worse because of long delays in accessing care.

Choice is Denied

In many government-controlled health care systems, the government chooses for you and your physician: deciding what type of care you should receive and when.

Quality Suffers

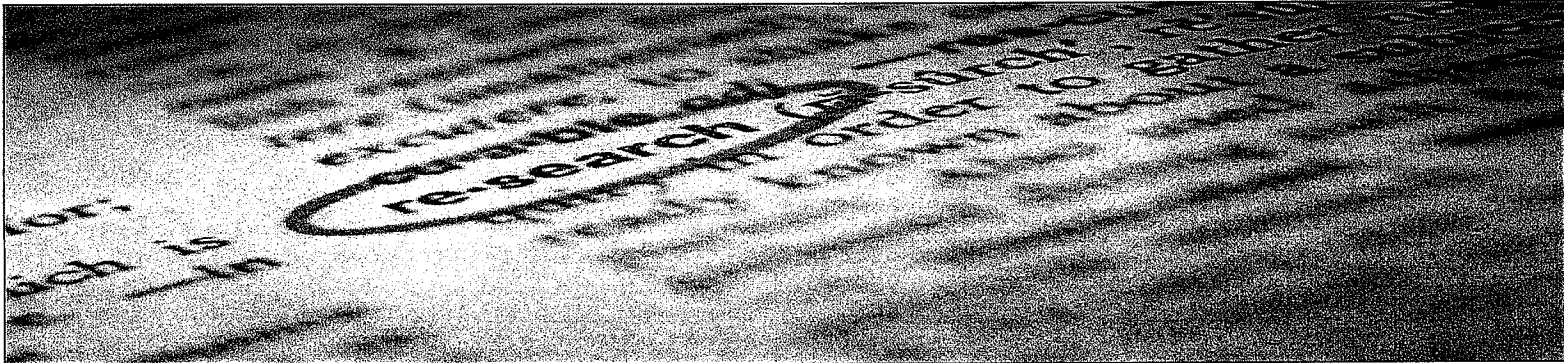
Government-controlled health systems can bar patients from receiving innovative therapies and treatments; the government can decide that the treatment costs too much and should not be covered.

Innovation Is Stifled

Government control is all about rationing the status quo. Our system is better for patients, because it delivers innovative therapies more quickly

Strategy III: Work with Allies to Reframe the Debate

Tactics: Marshal the Facts



- **Compile quantitative data** on the problems with government-controlled health care systems related to key messages (access, choice, innovation, quality, and competition)
- **Aggregate “the best of” research studies** assessing the impact of government control on health quality; distribute as an online reference guide
- **Support free-market policy organizations** seeking to produce white papers, reports, issue briefs, and fact sheets on key issues related to government-controlled health care
 - Support with op-ed campaign
- **Catalogue the work of academics** who are currently working on and develop ideas for further research and studies
- **Use survey research** to validate the perceived shortcomings of single-payer system

Strategy III: Work with Allies to Reframe the Debate

Tactics: Get the Word Out

- ✓ **Via allied organizations, educate stakeholders (especially media) about the disadvantages of government-controlled health care**
 - Commission and release opinion research to show that most Americans do not support a government-run system.
 - Create an online “patient profiler” that allows individuals to enter their medical conditions and learn how long treatment would take and what limitations would be under various government-run systems
 - Showcase victims and horrors of government-run systems (online, blogs, Youtube videos)
 - Recruit a core group of European/Canadian experts to engage with U.S. media via briefings, events, etc.
 - Use the SiCKO news hook to explore the interest of mainstream media in chronicling problems with government-controlled system



Strategy IV: Position SiCKO as a Threat to Democrats' Larger Agenda



- Recruit credible health policy and political experts who could articulate this threat.
- Frame the movie for political reporters in primary states and Washington's political echo chamber as a political tool to drive centrist democrats to the political left and embrace politically untenable policies
- Generate a similar debate among influential political bloggers and online commentators

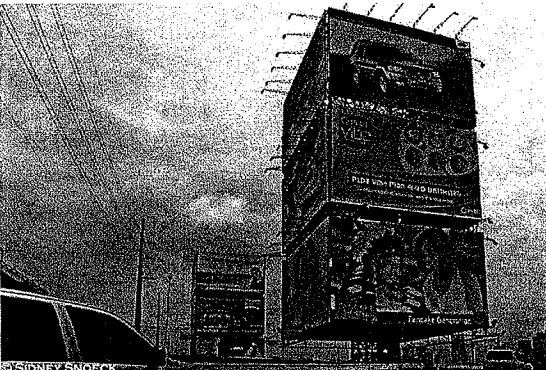
Strategy IV: Position SiCKO as a Threat to Democrats' Larger Agenda

- **Build awareness among centrist Democratic policy organizations**
 - Democratic Leadership Council briefing
 - Progressive Policy Institute briefing
- **Encourage select Democratic pundits to engage with the media by:**
 - Conducting one-on-one briefings
 - Releasing quantitative research to show that Moore's views are out of sync with the majority of American voters
 - Demonstrating the Moore is a polarizing figure among the American electorate – while revered among left-wing net roots and liberal activists in Blue States, Moore repels Red State swing voters and Reagan Democrats

Message to Democratic Insiders:

Embracing Moore is one-way ticket back to minority-party status

Strategy V: Prepare for the Worst Case



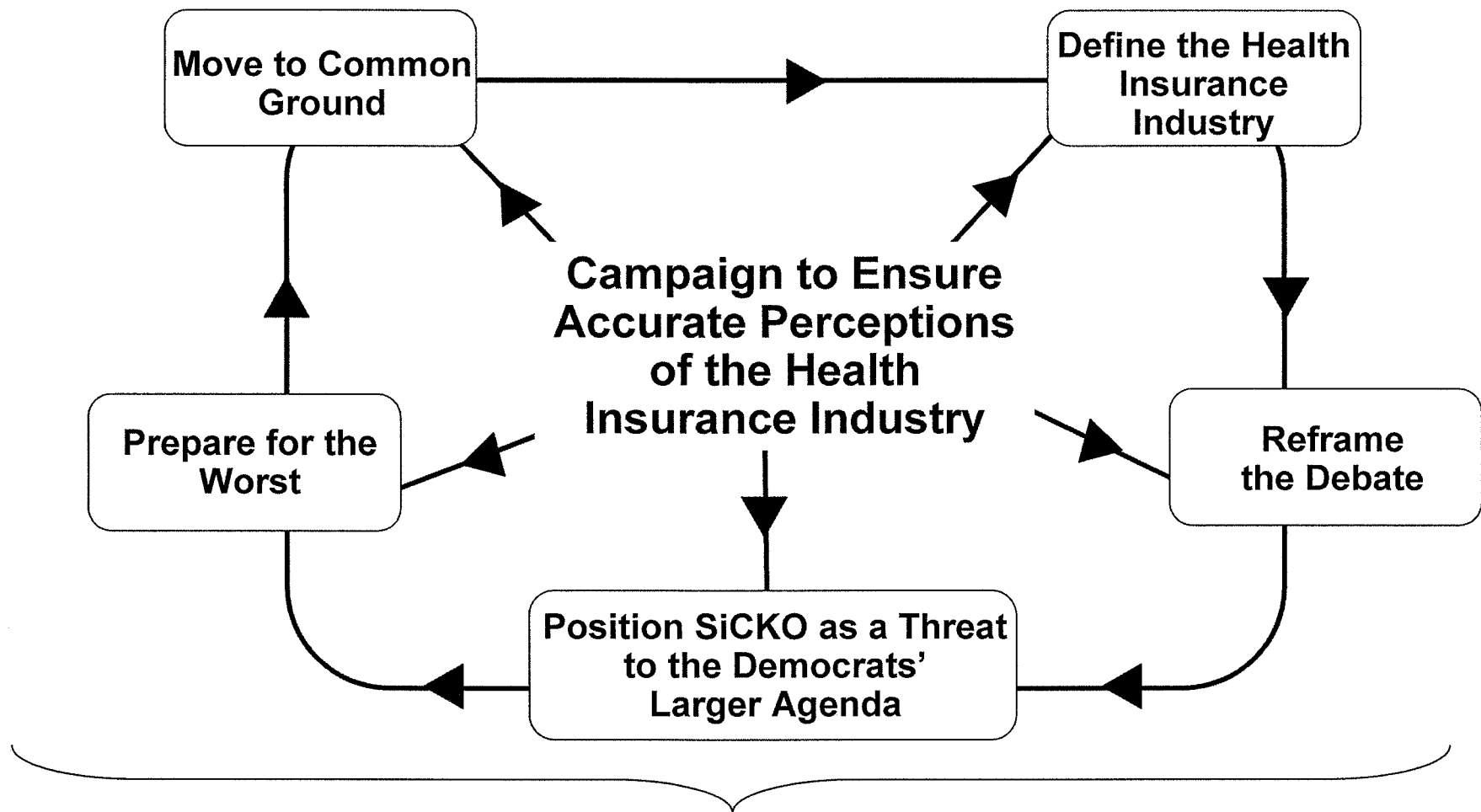
- Ongoing active monitoring of public opinion, media coverage and online conversation
- Consider a stronger industry response if/when:
 - SiCKO evolves into a sustained populist movement;
 - Serves as an organizing point for politically active citizens
 - SiCKO and Michael Moore are embraced among mainstream Democrats;
 - Embrace “fringe” policies
 - Increase and sustain their attacks on the health insurance industry
 - Quantitative research shows a sustained increase in support for the movie’s agenda
- Potential Response:
 - A national campaign to disqualify the ideas that Moore and his allies advocate. Force elected officials to make a choice between radical rhetoric and common-sense solutions supported by the vast majority of Americans.

What Success Looks Like

- ✓ The movie is a public relations challenge for a number of months – but does not fundamentally alter the politics of health care
- ✓ Media coverage reflects the industry's position, positive initiatives and eagerness to engage in a substantive dialogue
- ✓ The industry does not engage Moore in a debate on *his* terms or appear arrogant, defensive or out-of-touch in the face of criticism



Industry Will Achieve its Metrics through An Integrated Approach



Integrated approach touches policymakers, media, presidential candidates, and company employees/stakeholders/retirees

High-Level Timeline for Implementation of Strategic Plan

Strategies

Timeline

June July Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar

