

## VOTE AT INTELLIGENCE SQUARED U.S. DEBATE IN NEW YORK SHOWS WIDE AUDIENCE SUPPORT FOR THE OBAMA HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL

### Bloomberg Television to Broadcast Debate Beginning Tonight at 9PM

NEW YORK – January 14, 2011 –Intelligence Squared U.S. (IQ2US), the Oxford-style debate series, an initiative of The Rosenkranz Foundation, hosted a debate earlier this week on the motion, ***Repeal Obamacare***. The debate, the first in IQ2US's spring series "America's House Divided," was particularly timely given the planned House of Representatives vote to consider repealing the landmark health care reform bill. Arguments on both sides of the motion were passionate and insightful but in the end, one side had the clear support of the vast majority of the live audience in New York and the motion was rejected soundly.

At the beginning of the evening prior to the debate, 17% of the audience agreed with the motion, ***Repeal Obamacare***, 47 % were against it and 36% were undecided. After the debate, the side arguing against the motion had moved more of the audience members to their position; they ended up with 72% of the vote, 22% were against the motion and 6% remained undecided.

The evening's winning team included Jonathan Cohn, a senior editor at the New Republic, senior fellow at Demos, and the author of "Sick," and Paul Starr, a professor of sociology and public affairs at Princeton University and co-founder and co-editor of the American Prospect magazine. He served as an adviser during the formulation of the Clinton health care plan.

On the side arguing for the motion was Douglas Holtz-Eakin, president of the American Action Forum and a former director of the Congressional Budget Office. He previously served as the director of domestic and economic policy for the John McCain 2008 presidential campaign and John Shadegg, a former Republican representative from Arizona who has introduced legislation to promote patient choice, individual ownership and portability in health insurance.

Among the debate's highlights:

"...we're also a nation that honors limited government and honors individual choice. I think, on the one hand, what you hear from the other side is that the government can manage this issue better. And what I would suggest to you is we are in this problem because the government made changes that took you and I out of the equation. The government said health insurance is available only if your employer buys it and you get a tax deduction. But if you go out and buy it, it's one-third more expensive. If you can't hire and fire somebody's who delivering a service to you, you can't hold it accountable including its costs." –

**John Shadegg**

"I do think this is a question of our public philosophy and the obligations that we owe to one another. And it is, I think, a sad commentary on us that we remain the only advanced country that doesn't provide protection to all of our citizens. Now the reason that we have ...let's go back to why we have this employer-based system. If you don't have government share, spread the costs of healthcare, there needs to be some organization that serves as the pool for risk. And the employer is the most convenient way to do it. That's actually why this first developed in the 1930s and '40s before we had the tax advantages. It's simply going to default from the government to employers. It's not as though the government took

this away from individuals. That individual market that the Congressman loves is phenomenally inefficient." – **Paul Starr**

"I support exchanges. ....I always support good competitive markets. And you can build exchanges that enhance competition...to do that. There is a lot in the bill that is bipartisan. It's in the delivery system reforms, not in the coverage expansions which are madness. But they're all tiny. They're pilots. Pilots have a terrible track record of actually turning into real policy. In fact the road to healthcare hell is paved with pilots and demonstrations. And that's a pilot and a demonstration for a known problem. If you've got a problem, fix it. The problem with this bill, it doesn't fix what we know is the issue, healthcare costs." – **Douglas Holtz-Eakin**

"This Affordable Care Plan...it says, all right, let's create a market, a real market, a place -- kind of like Expedia, like they have in Massachusetts now where everybody who's buying one actually gets a choice of insurance programs, instead of plans that they know they can afford that will be made available to them regardless if they're a cancer survivor and let all of those people shop. Meanwhile, employers who have insurance for their employees will continue to provide that. Look, at some point it is very easy to say we want to open up exchanges for everybody and let everybody shop. You can build on this system to do that." – **Jonathan Cohn**

John Donvan, correspondent for ABC News Nightline, is moderator of Intelligence Squared U.S. debates. Dana Wolfe is the executive producer.

To view transcripts and videos, download audio or video clips or learn more about Intelligence Squared U.S. please visit: <http://www.intelligencesquaredus.org>

This debate will air at 9PM on Bloomberg Television beginning tonight, Friday, January 14, 2011. To find Bloomberg TV in your area, please visit <http://bloomberg.viewerlink.tv/>

#### ABOUT INTELLIGENCE SQUARED U.S.

Launched in September 2006, the goal of Intelligence Squared U.S., an initiative of the Rosenkranz Foundation, is to raise the level of public discourse and promote a realization that, on contentious issues, those who challenge the conventional wisdom have intellectually respectable and often persuasive viewpoints. We encourage citizens to "Think Twice" about their opinions and participate in the conversation, and we provide a forum for balanced discussion that transcends emotion and ideology. Through an annual series of between 10 to 12 live Oxford-style debates, IQ2US brings together experts and audience around public policy and cultural issues. IQ2US debates air on the Bloomberg Television network and are heard on more than 220 NPR stations nationwide.

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Contact:

Eileen Murphy

917.913.2233 | [eileen@eileenmmurphy.com](mailto:eileen@eileenmmurphy.com)

[www.intelligencesquaredus.org](http://www.intelligencesquaredus.org)