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Health Care Town Halls — What to do at disruptive town halls

Health care town hall meetings across the country are being attacked by a vocal minority uninterested in democratic debate. It is still important to attend these meetings as there will be many in the audience that are unfamiliar with single payer AND willing to listen and learn.

Be empowered, not intimidated. Most people support single payer national health insurance. The people attempting to shut down democratic debate are a very small percentage of the population mobilized by well-funded ultraconservatives.

Show up early. Every town hall meeting is different so try to speak with the organizers ahead of time. Sign up early to ask questions or share comments. Network with others before the meeting starts and don't forget your ID.

Show your viewpoints visually. If you are a physician or health practitioner, wearing professional clothes is a great way to show your credentials. Or coordinate with other PNHPers to wear matching T-shirts. Bring signs, if allowed.

Bring informational sheets to hand out. There is plenty of information outlining the current legislation and single payer national health insurance on www.pnhp.org. For information on the Weiner Amendment see www.pnhp.org/amendment.

Sign people up. A clipboard for e-mail addresses can do wonders in packed meeting halls. Make notes so you can differentiate between people that want to volunteer and those that would just like to learn more before committing.

Debrief. Share what you know with local chapter members and the PNHP office. We are keeping close track of where our politicians stand on health care issues and will use any information you can provide us to further our targeting of legislators.

Contact for more information:

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