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## CEO of Insurance Giant WellPoint Inc. Calls AUFC TV Ad That Spotlights Massive Compensation for Insurance Company CEO's "Unfair"

Americans United for Change: "It probably does seem 'unfair' to someone that was [compensated \\$9,844,212](#) last year. You know what's really unfair: insurance companies routinely denying millions of claims made by policy holders or refusing to issue policies altogether by citing "pre-existing" conditions."

[Click Here to Watch "GOP Rx"](#)

Washington D.C. – Americans United for Change understands why Angela Braly, president and chief executive officer of insurance giant WellPoint Inc., called AUFC's [recent television ad](#) "unfair" on [NPR's Morning Edition](#) on Friday – an ad that suggested exorbitant insurance industry executive compensation, like the \$12.2 million Cigna CEO H. Edward Hanway was compensated last year, may explain why the industry wants to kill health insurance reform and keep things the way they are. The [\\$9,844,212 in compensation](#) Braly received in 2008 may explain why she took offense.

Tom McMahon, Acting Executive Director, Americans United for Change: "We understand why the CEO of insurance giant WellPoint would find an ad critical of exorbitant executive compensation in the insurance industry "unfair" after receiving \$9,844,212 in compensation last year. The massive pay of the insurance industry's CEOs is certainly a fair point to make in the health insurance reform debate, because it's clear the goal of the private insurance industry is not providing coverage to all Americans at the lowest possible price – it's making the hugest profits possible. But you know what's really unfair: insurance companies routinely disqualifying Americans from coverage based on "pre-existing conditions," "rescinding" policies when policy holders get seriously ill, and raising premiums based on past medical history."

From [National Public Radio \(NPR\)'s Morning Edition on August 21, 2009:](#)

NPR's STEVE INSKEEP: You certainly are correct when you say that the tone of the debate has shifted, because it appeared in the spring that the health insurance companies were on the same page as the White House, or close to it - or at least talking to the White House. And now there's certainly a different tone, not only in the president's statements, but in some of his supporters or liberal groups. Here's an ad I'd like to play you from a group called Americans United for Change, which supports big changes to health care.

(Soundbite of advertisement)

Unidentified Woman #1: Why do the health insurance companies and Republicans want to kill President Obama's health insurance reform?

Unidentified Woman #2: Because they like things the way they are now. Ed Hanway, CEO of insurance giant Cigna, makes \$12.2 million a year.

INSKEEP: That's the ad from Americans United for Change. Is that fair?

Ms. BRALY: **You know, I don't think it's fair** because, Steve, we came to the table very early on for reform. We offered really meaningful solutions. And so I think that's gotten lost in the debate. I don't think most Americans know that we really came to the table early on as a proponent for some real solutions to health care reform.

See a recent report from the U.S. Health and Human Services entitled ["Coverage Denied: How the Current Health Insurance System Leaves Millions Behind; "Pre-Existing Conditions" Affect Millions of Americans"](#) that found:

- A recent national survey estimated that 12.6 million non-elderly adults<sup>5</sup> – 36 percent of those who tried to purchase health insurance directly from an insurance company in the individual insurance market – were in fact discriminated against because of a pre-existing condition in the previous three years.<sup>6</sup>
- In another survey, one in 10 people with cancer said they could not obtain health coverage, and six percent said they lost their coverage, because of being diagnosed with the disease.<sup>7</sup>
- It is still legal in nine states for insurers to reject applicants who are survivors of domestic violence, citing the history of domestic violence as a pre-existing condition.<sup>8</sup>
- Even when offering coverage, insurers can exclude whole categories of illnesses related to a pre-existing condition. For example, someone with a pre-existing condition of hay fever could have any respiratory system disease – such as bronchitis or pneumonia – excluded from coverage.<sup>9</sup>

[\*\*Click Here to View AUFC's Latest Ad "Real Death Panels"\*\*](#)