

Questions for Gubernatorial Debates:

1. What is your vision for health care in Tennessee?
2. Do you believe quality health care is an essential right or a free-market product & service?
3. In April 2005, Gov. Bredesen, you suspended enrollment for the medically needy, but have promised to re-open this category several times and promised again in Dec. 2005 – the program is still closed to enrollment. Why have you not kept your promise?
For Sen. Bryson: If elected, would you immediately reopen the medically need category?
4. The Institute of Medicine states that limiting benefits does not save health care dollars in the long run. Do you believe, then, that limiting benefits and shifting medical costs some where else is a smart way to control health care costs?
5. How will Cover Tennessee help the 200,000 poor, sick Tennesseans cut from TennCare?
6. CoverKids currently plans to limit services for special needs children. If elected or re-elected, what will you do to make sure that children with special needs receive the medical care they need?
7. Studies indicated that proper vision and dental care help children do better in school and in life, in general. Will you work to provide this coverage for kids in the CoverKids program?
8. The American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association for Mental Retardation, National Head Start, American Federation of State, County and Municipal workers, and several denominations and leaders of faith are supporting and working for national health care coverage for all children. Do you support this effort?
9. It is clear that the new TennCare, Safety Net, and Cover Tennessee are not and will not meet the needs of uninsured middle- and low-income adults with chronic and severe health conditions. How will you help these Tennesseans?
10. The Institute of Medicine tells us that no health is free but there are efficient ways to pay for it. Studies indicate that significant savings are accrued when people have access to a regular doctor via affordable access to health care insurance. Do you agree and, if so, what will you do to make this happen for every Tennessean?

11. As one million Tennesseans are in crisis due to lack of health insurance, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Tennessee, not-for-profit, sits on a \$1.4 billion surplus and continues to raise premiums and reduce benefits unchecked. Do you think this is a good thing? If not, what are you going to do to change it?
12. Blue Cross Blue Shield has a special code in state law as a not-for-profit organization. Other states have required their BCBS plans to support charity care for the uninsured. Given the health care crisis in Tennessee and BCBS's surplus, are you willing to make them do their part to help take the burden off hospitals, doctors, and the uninsured?
13. In 2002, there were about 600,000 uninsured Tennesseans, today there are about 1 million and counting. What are you going to do to stop this health care crisis?
14. Do you believe health care is a human right or a commodity?
15. The fact is that the 200,000 Tennesseans cut from TennCare were mostly poor. They will not be able to buy high-priced, high risk policies in the private market or through Access Tennessee, high-risk pool. What are you willing to do to help poor Tennesseans with dreadful diseases like Parkinson, epilepsy, kidney disease, MS, bone cancers, etc?