

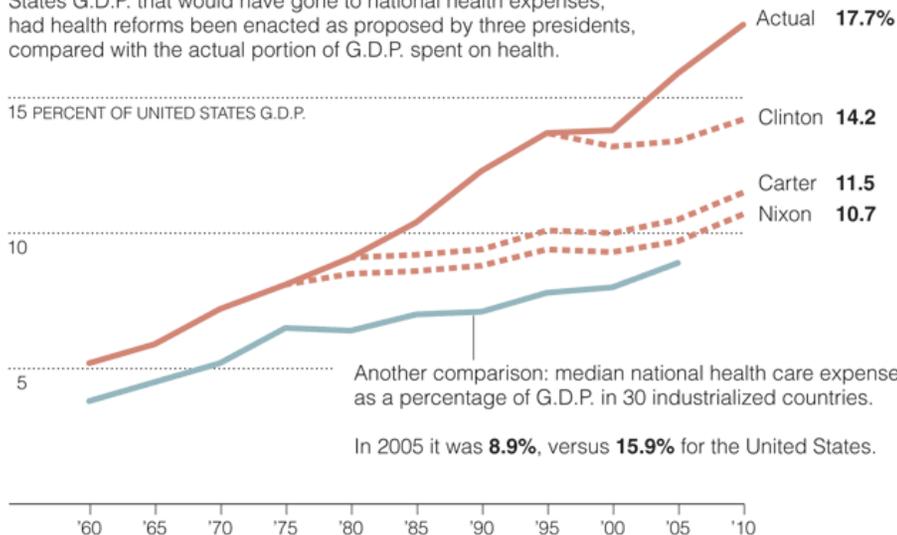
# HEALTH CARE REFORM: DOING NOTHING MEANS SKYROCKETING COSTS

Health care reform is about reining in health care costs – for families, for small businesses and for our country. Without reform, costs are expected to skyrocket every year in the foreseeable future. That is why the House is moving forward on a plan to stop the rise in premiums such as when one company recently increased its premiums 39%; creating a competitive, private marketplace where individuals and small businesses can shop for affordable health insurance online; and tackling waste, fraud and abuse in all of our federal programs.

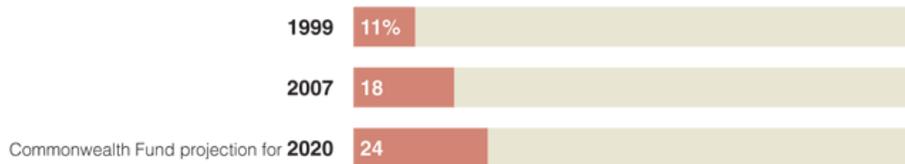
## What Might Have Been

The Commonwealth Fund, a nonpartisan health research group, has analyzed potential cost savings of past proposals on health care reform.

**SMALLER SHARES** Here are estimates of the percentage of United States G.D.P. that would have gone to national health expenses, had health reforms been enacted as proposed by three presidents, compared with the actual portion of G.D.P. spent on health.



**GROWING BURDEN** Average family health insurance premium as a percentage of median family income (for all households, including those that pay on their own and those whose insurance is paid by employers):



Source: The Commonwealth Fund

[ New York Times, [2/28/10](#) ]

*“Suppose Congress and President Obama fail to overhaul the system now, or just tinker around the edges, or start over, as the Republicans propose — despite the Democrats’ latest and possibly last big push that began last week at a marathon televised forum in Washington. Then ‘my health care’ stays the same, right? Far from it, health policy analysts and economists of nearly every ideological persuasion agree. **The unrelenting rise in medical costs is likely to wreak havoc within the system and beyond it, and pretty much everyone will be affected, directly or indirectly.**” [New York Times, [2/26/10](#)]*

*“Robert Reischauer is the head of the Urban Institute. He’s also one of the CBO’s most revered former directors, in no small part because his relentlessly honest cost estimates helped doom Bill Clinton’s bill in 1994. I reached him earlier today and asked whether he thought this bill made fiscal sense. **‘Were I in Congress and asked to vote on this,’ he replied, ‘I’d vote in favor.’** The bill isn’t perfect, he continued, **‘but it at least has the prospect for creating a platform over which more significant and far-reaching cost containment can be enacted.’** The same cannot be said for the status quo.” [Ezra Klein, Washington Post, [3/1/10](#)]*

***“The escalating burden these costs place on employers, individuals and the government is not sustainable. We believe that many of the delivery-system reforms under consideration will make significant strides towards reducing the cost burden on purchasers, while improving access to and quality of the care provided....** Congress should continue to work in a bipartisan manner to pass legislation that will reduce costs, improve quality, expand coverage and avoid disruption of the benefits currently provided by employers to employees, retirees and their families. The economic and human consequences of not addressing the cost spiral are too great to quit.” [John J. Castellani, President of Business Roundtable, [3/1/10](#)]*