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**McCain Discusses Health Care at LIVESTRONG Summit Town
Hall Meeting
Audience Q&A
LIVESTRONG
July 24, 2008**

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PAULA ZAHN: -who is going to pose a question about something the Senator talked about at the top of the evening, improving access to health care. You could stand or sit whatever is comfortable. You do not have to salute [laughter].

FEMALE SPEAKER: Okay.

PAULA ZAHN: We should, first of all, mention that you are a local army leader from Jacksonville, Florida, which we salute you for that service [applause].

FEMALE SPEAKER: My question is what is your view on underserved communities and their inability to get information on cancer-related issues and resources?

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-ARIZ.): I thank you and, by the way, I spent part of my time in the United States Navy in Jacksonville in Orange Park specifically and it is a wonderful place too. This microphone is brought to you by the Democratic National Committee [laughter] [applause]. Among many other things, we have to do is to, I think, increase the numbers of community health centers in America. They are the finest and most wonderful people in the world. They are providing the kind of care that there is an enormous gap.

I also think that we need to do a better job in education particularly in lower income areas. I think the civil rights issue of the 21st century is education in America, we

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should not condemn people to parts of Jacksonville, Florida where you live, to inadequate schools with inadequate education.

We all know that smoking among lower income Americans is higher and, by the way, we also know that incidence of breast cancer is more prevalent amongst African American women and prostate cancer is more prevalent amongst African American males. We have got to figure this out. We have got to try to understand what it is that is attacking, in such great numbers, a specific group of American citizens. So I hope that that adequately or partially answers.

One of the things we do in town hall meetings that I have, if you have a response to my response, I would love to hear it.

FEMALE SPEAKER: Oh I just wanted to say thank you. You answered the question.

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-ARIZ.): Thank you.

PAULA ZAHN: Who is your microphone provided by [laughter], AP. We are doing all kinds of advertisements here tonight. Ron Vye [misspelled?], where are you sitting tonight? I know you are somewhere. I know you have a question you would love to ask the Senator. It is all yours.

RON VYE: Senator McCain, as President, how will you bridge the gap between what we know and what we do in early

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detection and treatment and how will you provide for the people that fall outside the system?

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-ARIZ.): We are going to have to increase, as far as, first of all, as far as children are concerned, the S-CHIP program. There are millions of young Americans who are eligible for S-CHIP and simply have not been signed up because they have not had the information or lethargy on the part of their parents or whatever the issue is.

We have to, I believe with people as I mentioned in my earlier remarks, we are falling in the quote uninsurable category. We have got to develop government-approved plans and those have to be significant contribution on the part of the federal government but also the state government as well as others so that we can establish a large pool so that we can do what is necessary to provide those Americans with health insurance that they can take with them and that they can have. It is just an obligation that we have in our society. Is there a follow-up or response?

RON VYE: I would also question about underinsured individuals.

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-ARIZ.): In the case of underinsured, the problem grows greater because health care costs are skyrocketing. They are close to double digit inflation or at double digit inflation in America.

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I want the decisions to be placed in the hands of the families. I want every American family to have a \$5,000 refundable tax credit. Now if that family wants to keep the employer-provided insurance, they can do that but I also want them to have the option of taking it, of having a \$5,000 refundable tax credit that they can take any place in America. Right now, they are restricted to the state in which they provide. That is crazy. It is crazy.

Then we need to take a whole bunch of other steps in order to provide them with the necessary breaks to inflation including outcome-based treatment, including encouragement of home health care and incentives for that over institutionalized health care, wellness and fitness, which we have talked about so much, insurance policies that will reward people who practice wellness and fitness, who do well on their physicals, who join a health club, who do all the things that bring about wellness and fitness including smoking and those kinds of incentives, I am convinced, will take down the cost of health care in America.

The problem with health care in America, in my opinion, is not the quality. The quality is the highest in the world. That is why whenever somebody that is really rich gets sick, they come to the United States of America for treatment. It is the cost of health care and the portability.

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How many Americans do you know that fear losing their job not because they cannot get another job although that is harder and harder in America, but they are not going to be able to take their insurance policy with them? This is a great fear that American families have and we have got to make that health care affordable and portable for all Americans. That decision rests in the families not in the federal government.

I do not believe that in Canada or England or in other countries that government-run health care is satisfactory.
Thank you [applause].

PAULA ZAHN: Senator just very quickly before we wrap this all up, you mentioned the S-CHIP program that would provide health care for children and yet, did that bill not go down because there was also a proposed tax increase on tobacco and how do you reconcile that as a legislator?

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-ARIZ.): One of the ways that I reconcile it is if they wanted to get revenues from the use of tobacco products, which would mean that we are encouraging the use of tobacco products. I do not think we ought to do that in America.

I think we ought to do everything we can to eliminate and reduce and eventually eliminate the use of tobacco products, also the expansion of the program was dramatically increased and the cost not paid for again. It was going to go

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far outside the realm of just children, which called the program of health insurance for children. It was going to apply to many others.

Now if we want it to apply to many, many others, let us have another program but let us not call it S-CHIP and let us certainly not rely on having people use and even increase their use of tobacco products. I thought the whole effort we should make is to reduce and eliminate. If we do that then there is no money to pay for. Thank you Paula and you are very well informed.

PAULA ZAHN: Oh thank you very much. Lance, I do not know about you but I think every time we have a gathering like this, there is a tremendous power of the collective spirit here. There are so many critical issues that we need to tackle and I am delighted that you, Lance, have provided a forum for us to really address issues that have a tremendous impact on every single life in this country.

LANCE ARMSTRONG: Yes.

SEN. JOHN MCCAIN (R-ARIZ.): And could I just say again, just a great American hero, I want every American hero to go to every school in America and I want them to motivate young Americans not to smoke, to practice wellness and fitness. I would love to believe that Americans always listen to me.

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I was in Miami and there was a young man, I went to Miami Children's Hospital, a young man there lost 97 pounds. You know why he did it Lance? Because he took up the challenge of Shaq, Shaquille O'Neill and I want us to try to get every athlete that is famous and revered across America to do what this great American has done [applause]. Thank you and I am honored that you [inaudible] [applause]. Thank you.

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