

HEALTH

## Disparate Groups Team Up On Healthcare Advertising Buy

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The largest pharmaceutical interest group is funding two separate multimillion-dollar ad campaigns thanking lawmakers for voting to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program. The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America is teaming up with several groups it has tangled with in the past -- Families USA, the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network and the Service Employees International Union -- to run ads thanking 49 House members and 34 senators for their votes. That includes Pennsylvania Sens. Robert Casey Jr., a Democrat, and Republican **Arlen Specter**, and Maryland Democratic Sens. **Barbara Mikulski** and **Benjamin Cardin**. "This collaboration is especially important because it emphasizes the broad support for comprehensive health care reform. We may always have differences of opinion, but we strongly agree that health care reform is a shared priority," PhRMA President Billy Tauzin said in a statement.

Families USA spokesman Dave Lemmon said the ad buy was over \$10 million, but he would not say how much each group was contributing to the effort. The ads for senators began Feb. 8 and will continue for three weeks, while the ads for House members will run for two weeks, he said. PhRMA is funding a similar set of ads backed by America's Agenda, a coalition made up of labor unions. PhRMA is "a big contributor" to the "multimillion" ad buy, spokeswoman Nicole Korkolis said. While the Laborers' International Union of North America is listed as a key sponsor of the ad, a spokesman said they did not help fund the ad buy. Backers said even though the CHIP legislation had already passed, they hoped to continue the drumbeat to build momentum for health reform. "It serves the dual purpose of not only thanking them but reminding them of a down payment on more comprehensive health care reform," Lemmon said.

by Kasie Hunt

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