

POL 220: The American Presidency

Name: _____

Please read the article on the following page and answer the questions in the space provided.

1. Knowledge and conceptual understanding:

In the space below, draw a line depicting preferences for spending on SCHIP. Place, *properly spaced*, and label the following points on this line: Congress' preference (using the Senate bill), President Bush's preference, and the status quo.

2. Thinking and other skills:

(a) How far is President Bush from the status quo? _____

(b) How far is President Bush from Congress? _____

(c) How far is Congress from the status quo? _____

(d) Is President Bush's veto threat credible (fully explain your answer)?

3. Attitudes, values, dispositions and habits of mind:

Congress passed the Senate's version of the SCHIP reauthorization and President Bush did veto that bill. What changes could Congress have made to the amount of spending in the bill to avoid a veto, but still have the bill be better for Congress than the President's position? Explain your answer in words and support your answer **graphically** using the techniques used in the previous questions.

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Adapted from: **CQ WEEKLY – COVER STORY**
July 23, 2007 – Page 2178

Kids' Health Gets Political

By Rebecca Adams, CQ Staff

On June 27, President Bush summoned six health care experts reflecting conservative and liberal views to the Oval Office to discuss a popular program that provides health coverage to children from poor families and to think out loud about how to cover more uninsured people. Conservatives have long been uncomfortable with the way the initiative called the State Children's Health Insurance Program, or **SCHIP** puts the government on the hook for billions of dollars of health care spending, though they have been careful not to criticize its intent. The discomfort has become especially acute since Democrats took control of Congress and proposed an ambitious expansion calling for as much as \$50 billion more spending to cover more kids.

...

Enacted as part of the 1997 law that put the federal government on course to a balanced budget, **SCHIP** is aimed at children in families that aren't poor enough to qualify for Medicaid. It provides grants to states to expand their Medicaid programs, or to create new child health insurance programs. Congress has made three rounds of legislative changes since the program's inception, mostly to liberalize rules for the use of unspent funds and tweak grant formulas based on populations of low-income children.

The changes currently under consideration would go much further. A plan approved by the Senate Finance Committee last week would more than double the cost of the program — to \$60 billion during the next five years, up from the current \$25 billion that's allowed. The expansion would be funded by an increase of 61 cents a pack in the federal tax on cigarettes, as well as increased taxes on other tobacco products.

...

However, the administration contends that a major expansion is unnecessary and that **SCHIP** can be sustained with a \$5 billion increase over five years, to \$30 billion. Bush has threatened to veto the Senate bill, while Cabinet officials depict Democratic efforts as a prelude to a broader government takeover of the health care system.

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Grading Rubric (Not given to students)

1. Knowledge and conceptual understanding (8 points):

Student drew a line with more spending on the left and less spending to the right	1 point
Student placed Congress at \$60B	1 point
Student placed President at \$30B	1 point
Student placed status quo at \$25B	1 point
Student labeled all three points	1 point
Distance between P and SQ is correctly spaced	1 point
Distance between C and P is correctly spaced	1 point
Distance between C and SQ is correctly spaced	1 point

2. Thinking and other skills (7 points):

Student calculates President is \$5B greater than SQ	1 point
Student calculates President is \$30B less than C	1 point
Student calculates Congress is \$35B greater than SQ	1 point
Student identifies veto threat as CREDIBLE	1 point
<i>Explanation (circle all that apply):</i>	
President is closer to SQ than to C	1 point
President is \$5B away from SQ	1 point
President is \$30B away from C	1 point

3. Attitudes, values, dispositions and habits of mind (10 points):

Student says Congress could have REDUCED spending	1 point
Student identifies a specific range of spending between \$30B and \$35B OR Student identifies a point greater than \$30B, but less than \$35B OR Student identifies \$35B as the best point of compromise for Congress	1 point 1 point 2 points
<i>Explanation:</i>	
(If student identified \$30B to \$35B as compromise range): Range includes the values that president prefers to SQ and are closer to Congress than P OR (If student identified a point between \$30B and \$35B): Point is preferable to president than SQ and closer to Congress than P OR (If student identified \$35B as the point): \$35B is the closest Congress can get to its position, while still giving the president an amount preferable to SQ	1 point 1 point 2 points
<i>Graphical support:</i>	
Student produces line graph from Question 1	1 point
Student identifies the distance between P and SQ	1 point
Student identifies the distance of the same magnitude between P and C	1 point
Student shades this region (between \$30B to \$35B) OR Student identifies the point \$35B	1 point 2 points