

# OPERA – fiche sociographique

## Democrate – TASK Force Clinton

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<http://www.promenadespeakers.com/page118.html>

#### Chris Jennings - Clinton Healthcare Advisor

Chris Jennings is a more than two decade-long health policy veteran of the White House, Congress and the private sector. He currently serves as president of Jennings Policy Strategies (JPS), Inc., **a nationally-respected health policy and advocacy consulting firm in Washington, D.C.** JPS, Inc. provides policy analysis, strategic guidance and coalition building advice to clients who share a commitment to affordable, accessible and accountable health care. Clients include businesses (e.g., General Motors), public employers (e.g., CalPERS), labor organizations (e.g., AFL-CIO and SEIU), consumer groups (e.g., AARP and the Partnership for Women & Families) and foundations (e.g., the Clinton Global Initiative).

#### White House Senior Health Care Advisor – 1993-2001

Prior to founding JPS, Inc., *Mr. Jennings served in the White House as the Senior Health Care Advisor to President William Jefferson Clinton* at the Domestic Policy and National Economic Councils. During his tenure there, **Mr. Jennings made significant contributions toward the enactment of major, bipartisan health legislation including the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, the Mental Health Parity Act, the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act, the Work Incentives Improvement Act, and the tripling of funding for international AIDS programs for prevention, care, treatment and health infrastructure.** Recognizing his work at the White House, the National Journal designated Mr. Jennings as one of Washington's 100 most influential individuals throughout the entire Federal government.

*As the President's Senior Health Policy Advisor, he was charged with developing and implementing the Administration's health care policy.* In this capacity, Mr. **Jennings coordinated and oversaw the health policy work of numerous Federal agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget and the Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, and Labor.** *He also had lead responsibility for communicating and advocating Administration health policy to the Congress, state and local governments, health care interest groups, and the media.*

**In 1993 and 1994, he served as the Senior Advisor to Administrator of the then Health Care Financing Administration.** In this capacity, he served concurrently as the congressional liaison for First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton providing assistance for her testimony before five committees and staffing her for hundreds of meetings with members of Congress as she advocated for affordable, quality health insurance for all Americans.

#### Congressional Health Care Advisor – 1983-1993

Prior to joining the Clinton Administration, Mr. Jennings served as Committee staff for three United States Senators (Glenn, Melcher, and Pryor) over the course of almost ten years on Capitol Hill. As Deputy Staff Director of the Senate Aging Committee for Chairman David Pryor (D-AR), he *staffed the Senator before the Finance Committee and the "Pepper Commission."* He also coordinated Senator Pryor's legislative initiatives on health insurance affordability and access, long-term care, rural health, and prescription drug coverage and cost containment.

<http://www.academyhealth.org/Events/content.cfm?ItemNumber=931>

**Christopher Jennings is the president of Jennings Policy Strategies, Inc., a policy, legislative strategy, and communications consulting firm.**

**Mr. Jennings served the Clinton Administration for eight years.** As the President's senior health policy advisor, he was charged with developing and implementing the Administration's health care policy. In this capacity, Mr. Jennings coordinated and oversaw the health policy work of numerous federal agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget and the Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, and Labor. He also had lead responsibility for communicating and advocating Administration health policy to the Congress, state and local governments, health care interest groups, and the media.

**During his tenure in the White House, Mr. Jennings made significant contributions toward the enactment of major, bipartisan health legislation.** Statutory achievements include: the Kennedy-Kassebaum insurance reforms, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, the **Children's Health Insurance Program**, the *Balanced Budget Act of 1997* and its comprehensive Medicare reforms, the *Mental Health Parity Act*, the *Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act*, and the *Work Incentives Improvement Act*.

**Mr. Jennings also spearheaded a wide array of executive actions taken by the President.** These included: the extension by executive order of the consumer protection recommendations of the "Quality Commission" to 85 million Americans in federally-supervised health plans; the implementation of privacy protections for medical records; the banning of inappropriate use of genetic information for federal employment decisions; the extension of mental health coverage parity for federal employees; the expansion of Medicare coverage of clinical trials; the provision of expanded home and community-based alternatives to institutional care; the strengthening of nursing home quality standards and enforcement; and the successful implementation of anti-fraud and abuse initiatives within the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

**Mr. Jennings was also the chief architect of a wide array of legislative initiatives that have helped set the health care agenda for the new Administration and Congress.** *These include proposals to: strengthen and modernize Medicare, including the development of a Medicare prescription drug benefit; expand health insurance coverage to an additional five million uninsured Americans; secure passage of a bipartisan and enforceable Patients' Bill of Rights; and provide financial assistance and services to millions of Americans of all ages who need long-term care and for those who care for them.*

**Before his White House appointment, Mr. Jennings was the senior legislative health reform advisor to the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA).** During his tenure in this position (93-94), he worked closely with First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, assisting her in preparing for testimony before five Committees and staffing her for hundreds of meetings with Members of Congress.

**Prior to joining the Clinton Administration,** Mr. Jennings served as committee staff for three United States Senators (Glenn, Melcher, and Pryor) **over the course of almost ten years on Capitol Hill.** As deputy staff director of the Senate Aging Committee for *Chairman David Pryor (D-AR)*, he staffed the Senator before the Finance Committee and the "Pepper Commission."

He also coordinated Senator Pryor's legislative initiatives on prescription drug coverage and cost containment, long-term care, insurance market reform, rural health issues, and small business health coverage and access concerns.

<http://www.mlstrategies.com/articles/health-7-8-13.pdf>

*Chris Jennings to Join White House as Health Policy Strategist*

**On July 7th 2013, it was reported that Chris Jennings, a former Clinton Administration health policy strategist, will be joining the Obama Administration as Health Policy Coordinator and Strategist.** The White House is expected to announce Jennings' recruitment, in addition to other new health personnel, later this week. White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough commented that they are "excited to have someone with the depth of knowledge and expertise that Chris has" join the team, adding that Jennings' will be "an invaluable addition."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/08/us/politics/clinton-aide-joins-obama-on-health-care.html?pagewanted=print>

THE NEW YORK TIMES

July 7, 2013

**Clinton Aide Joins Obama on Health Care**

By **ROBERT PEAR**

WASHINGTON — In *an effort to put President Obama's health care program back on track, the White House has recruited Chris Jennings, a respected veteran of the Clinton administration, to join the Obama team as a health policy coordinator and strategist*, the White House said on Sunday night.

The White House expects to announce the hiring of Mr. Jennings and other health care personnel later this week.

"We are excited to have someone with the depth of knowledge and expertise that Chris has join us," said Denis R. McDonough, the chief of staff for Mr. Obama. "He will be an invaluable addition."

*Mr. McDonough said that Mr. Jennings had 30 years of experience in health policy, including a decade on Capitol Hill and eight years in the Clinton administration. Mr. Jennings worked on the Children's Health Insurance Program, adopted with bipartisan support when Bill Clinton was president.*

In addition, Mr. McDonough noted, Mr. Jennings worked with AARP to see that Medicare beneficiaries received prescription drug coverage under a law signed by President George W. Bush. Precise details of Mr. Jennings's new role are still being worked out.

Some Democrats, dismayed at the rocky rollout of Mr. Obama's program to provide health insurance to millions of Americans, said they were delighted at the prospect of Mr. Jennings's hiring.

*"Chris has a sound, intuitive sense of how to mix politics with policy values to achieve something on both fronts,"* said Christina S. Ho, an associate professor at Rutgers Law School who worked in the Clinton White House.

The Obama administration is hiring additional personnel in advance of the opening of marketplaces where consumers will be able to shop for insurance, starting on Oct. 1.

The hiring of Mr. Jennings comes a week after the White House announced that it would delay until 2015 a requirement for larger employers to offer coverage to employees.

*Mr. Jennings, 52, was President Clinton's chief health policy adviser from 1995 to January 2001. He is known and trusted by Obama administration officials and has close ties to Democrats and some Republicans in Congress.* In 2001, he established a lobbying and consulting concern, Jennings Policy Strategies. Current and former clients include the A.F.L.-C.I.O., the Bipartisan Policy Center, the Federation of American Hospitals, General Motors and the Generic Pharmaceutical Association.

Mr. Jennings was a registered lobbyist, but has not been one for a couple of years, so he would

not have to worry about Obama administration restrictions on lobbyists joining the government. **Ronald F. Pollack, the executive director of Families USA, a liberal-leaning consumer group, said Mr. Jennings “has the respect of every group inside or outside government involved in carrying out the Affordable Care Act.”**

He added: “Unlike so many people in Washington, Chris is mission oriented, not ego oriented. His ego is checked at the door.”

<http://www.politico.com/story/2014/01/chris-jennings-health-care-adviser-resigns-102527.html>

### Obama health care adviser Chris Jennings resigns

By **CARRIE BUDOFF BROWN** | 1/23/14 3:50 PM EST

Read more: <http://www.politico.com/story/2014/01/chris-jennings-health-care-adviser-resigns-102527.html#ixzz33ahDJSEV>

A senior health care adviser to President Barack Obama is departing the White House for personal reasons, an administration official said Thursday.

Chris Jennings, a respected policy expert who also worked in the Clinton administration, has resigned “due to a recent health care scare and other serious family considerations,” the official said.

The White House brought Jennings on board in July as part of a staff ramp-up ahead of the Oct. 1 rollout of HealthCare.gov, ***citing his deep understanding of the health policy, his knowledge of Capitol Hill and his ability to work across party lines. He served as a point of contact to the insurance industry.***

In recent weeks, Jennings has been absent from the White House as he dealt with his family issues. The White House official said two other senior aides — Phil Schilliro and Jeanne Lambrew — would pick up his portfolio.

***“We are all focused on reducing health care costs and implementing the Affordable Care Act,” White House chief of staff Denis McDonough said in a statement. “Nobody does so with more intellect, fortitude, and heart than Chris Jennings. Chris served the country at a time when he was needed most. He will be deeply missed but we all wish him the best and know that he will continue to be a key player in health care and always a champion for quality affordable health care for all Americans.”***

Jennings said in a statement that “it has been a great privilege to work with the president and his incredibly dedicated team on the Affordable Care Act. I will forever be grateful for the opportunity to serve.

“This is the cause of my professional life and I look forward to making continued contributions to that end,” Jennings added.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/08/chris-jennings-white-house\\_n\\_3563133.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/07/08/chris-jennings-white-house_n_3563133.html)

Huffingtonpost

### Chris Jennings Hired By White House For Health Care Reform Push

WASHINGTON, **July 8** (Reuters) - Amid questions about the future of President Barack Obama's healthcare reform law, the White House has hired a widely respected policy expert from the Clinton administration to help coordinate final implementation of "Obamacare."

Chris Jennings, a lobbyist who spent six years as a senior adviser to former President Bill Clinton, is among a group of new healthcare-related staff expected to join the Obama White

House formally later this week, an official said.

The appointment comes at a crucial juncture for Obama's Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Millions of uninsured Americans are slated to enroll in subsidized health coverage beginning Oct. 1 through new online insurance markets in all 50 states. But the administration has recently delayed an important segment of the roll-out, raising doubts about implementation at a time of intensifying attack from Republicans and other foes.

***Known for his communications skills and an ability to work across the partisan divide, Jennings has more than 30 years of healthcare experience that includes eight years with the Clinton White House and 10 years as a Senate aide on Capitol Hill.***

For the past dozen years, he has headed his own healthcare lobbying and consulting firm for clients that include labor unions, AARP and nonprofit groups including the Clinton Global Initiative.

The administration has been taking on new staff for months in anticipation of the opening of the exchanges. (Reporting by David Morgan; Editing by Cynthia Osterman)

Read more: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/feb/28/library-releasing-documents-clinton-years/#ixzz33ala8Heo>

***'90s documents show Clinton health care concerns***

By Ken Thomas and Philip Elliott

Friday, February 28, 2014

WASHINGTON — Bill Clinton's aides were concerned early in his presidency about his health care overhaul effort, led by his wife, that never passed and a need to soften the image of Hillary Rodham Clinton, according to documents released Friday. Mrs. Clinton now is a potential 2016 presidential contender.

The National Archives released about 4,000 pages of previously confidential documents involving the former president's administration, providing a glimpse into the struggles of his health care task force, led by the first lady, and other priorities such as the U.S. economy and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Hillary Clinton's potential White House campaign has increased interest in Clinton Presidential Library documents from her husband's administration during the 1990s and her own decades in public service. A former secretary of state and New York senator, Mrs. Clinton is the leading Democratic contender to succeed President Barack Obama, though she has not said whether she will run.

*Friday's documents included memos related to the former president's ill-fated health care reform proposal in 1993 and 1994, a plan that failed to win support in Congress and turned into a rallying cry for Republicans in the 1994 midterm elections. As first lady, Hillary Clinton chaired her husband's health care task force, largely meeting in secret to develop a plan to provide universal health insurance coverage.*

White House aides expressed initial optimism about her ability to help craft and enact a major overhaul of U.S. health care.

*"The first lady's months of meetings with the Congress has produced a significant amount of trust and confidence by the members in her ability to help produce a viable health reform legislative product with the president," said an undated and unsigned document, which was cataloged with others from April 1993. The document urged quick action, warning that enthusiasm for health reform "will fade over time."*

But the documents also showed the growing concerns among Clinton's fellow Democrats in

Congress. Lawmakers, it said, "going to their home districts for the August break are petrified about having difficult health care reform issues/questions thrown at them."

**Administration officials also wanted to distance Hillary Clinton from a staff meeting on the touchy subject of making health care cost projections appear reasonable. Top aides wrote an April 1993 memo saying pessimistic cost-savings projections from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office were "petrifying an already scared Congress."**

**"CBO has the very real potential to sink an already leaking health reform ship," said the memo, signed by Clinton aides Chris Jennings and Steve Ricchetti, the latter now a top aide to Vice President Joe Biden.**

**A White House and congressional meeting meant to "align budget assumptions with CBO" would be "all staff," the memo said, so "we do not believe it appropriate that Mrs. Clinton attend."**

By September 1993, Mrs. Clinton acknowledged the obstacles in a Capitol Hill meeting with House and Senate Democratic leaders and committee chairs. "I think that, unfortunately, in the glare of the public political process, we may not have as much time as we need for that kind of thoughtful reflection and research," the first lady said, citing "this period of challenge."

**The meetings also showed that Mrs. Clinton was doubtful that a health care law with a universal mandate — requiring people to carry health insurance — would be approved. "That is politically and substantively a much harder sell than the one we've got — a much harder sell," she told congressional Democrats in September 1993.**

**In 2007, when she ran for president, Clinton made the "individual mandate" a centerpiece of her "American Health Choices Plan," requiring health coverage while offering federal subsidies to help reduce the cost to purchasers.**

The health care overhaul signed into law by Obama in early 2010 carried a mandate that all Americans must obtain health insurance or pay a fine.

The documents also include detailed media strategy memos written as aides tried to soften Mrs. Clinton's image.

Her press secretary, Lisa Caputo, encouraged the Clintons to capitalize on their 20th wedding anniversary as "a wonderful opportunity for Hillary" and also suggested she spend more time doing White House events celebrating first ladies of the past.

Placing Clinton in a historical context "may help to round out her image and make what she is doing seem less extreme or different in the eyes of the media," Caputo wrote in a lengthy August 1995 memo about courting better press coverage as the president looked toward re-election.

Caputo also proposed the "wild idea" of having Clinton do a guest appearance on a popular sitcom of the day, "Home Improvement."

Other documents offered a glimpse into the juggling of priorities early in Clinton's first term and administration concerns after Republicans took control of the House and Senate in the 1994 elections.

A July 1993 memo shared among Clinton's advisers sought guidance on how the administration should focus its **attention on three major priorities: health care reform, the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement and an initiative aimed at "reinventing government."**

**"The president has repeatedly promised that health care will come after the economic package passes," the memo from Clinton advisers Rahm Emanuel, Bob Boorstin, Mark Gearan and others said. "Surveys indicate that health care remains the second or third priority (behind job creation) for the vast majority of voters, but also that people fear reform is just another promise to be broken."**

"Our core supporters are rapidly losing patience and could block passage by throwing their support to alternative plans," the memo warned.

Following the midterm losses, Clinton policy adviser William Galston wrote in January 1995, before the president's State of the Union address, that the public had "not given up on the Clinton presidency." But he warned the annual speech before Congress "may well be our last chance for a very long time to command the attention of the people as a whole. We cannot hold anything back."

The new documents offer only glimmers of Clinton's internal national security deliberations. The most detailed material, contained in files from then-national security speechwriter Paul Orzulak, show top Clinton officials wrestling with how to deal with China's emergence as a world financial power.

Notes from an undated meeting with National Security Adviser Samuel "Sandy" Berger show Berger pushing for China's membership in the World Trade Organization despite concerns about human rights abuses.

A series of emails pertaining to the 9/11 Commission's research into Clinton-era handling of al Qaeda attacks were all apparently withheld by Archives officials, citing national security and confidential restrictions. The only memo released was a single July 1998 email about whether to send a high-ranking diplomat to Minnesota with a presidential message to greet ailing Jordanian King Hussein. "Sounds like too much crepe hanging," said a dismissive official.

- *Associated Press* writers Stephen Braun, Henry C. Jackson, Connie Cass in Washington and Jill Zeman Bleed in Little Rock, Ark., contributed to this report.

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/28/hillary-clinton-presidential-library-releases-papers>

**Hillary Clinton advised to 'be real' in memo released by presidential library**

[Jon Swaine](#) in New York and [Dan Roberts](#) in Washington

[theguardian.com](http://theguardian.com), Friday 28 February 2014 20.47 GMT

### **US healthcare reform**

The documents also reveal the scale of the first lady's failed efforts to drive healthcare reform through Congress. *She ran what amounted to a parallel White House legislative department in 1993 to try to persuade reluctant senators and congressmen, and encountered many of the same obstacles now dogging Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act.*

Clinton advised Democrats against adopting a so-called "individual mandate" – the requirement forcing people to take out health insurance which is proving so divisive in Obamacare.

"If the Republican alternative, as it appears now to be shaping up, at least among the moderate Republicans in the Senate, is an individual mandate, we have looked at that in every way we know how to... that is politically and substantively a much harder sell than the one we've got – a much harder sell," the first lady said.

"Because not only will you be saying that the individual bears the full responsibility; you will be sending shock waves through the currently insured population that if there is no requirement that employers continue to insure, then they, too, may bear the individual responsibility."

News of her blunt criticism of the individual mandate principle may complicated any stance on Obamacare that Clinton chooses to adopt in the coming months.

Trying to push healthcare reform through Congress, her staff assembled a "war room" to track every member and expressed repeated concern about their alleged ignorance of healthcare policy.

*"In the recent history of the US Congress, it has been virtually impossible to pass any large*

***and potentially controversial initiative without identifying, getting to know, educating, stroking and responding to an ideologically diverse and ego-sensitive Congress that, individually and collectively, has become more and more independent,” wrote Clinton’s adviser Chris Jennings.***

But the team also discussed freezing out groups outside Washington that were considered a waste of time.

“We could end up wasting a huge amount of staff time ‘receiving input’ that would not accomplish very much toward actually building the coalition that will help us pass health care reform,” said one memo. “With literally hundreds and hundreds of groups wanting to give us input, we could assign 10 full-time staff people to do nothing but be in meetings all day everyday for four months, and we would still have groups we didn’t have time to meet.”

One document from the first lady’s press office pointed to a danger that may yet sink Obamacare, which has been criticised for depriving some patients of existing insurance cover.

“President [Bill Clinton], from the very beginning, has said to us, ‘This plan cannot leave people who are insured worse off,’” said Hillary in a private speech to Democratic lawmakers. “This plan has to leave them either the same or better off than they would be if the current system continued. It may be an unpleasant fact for some of us Democrats to face, but the argument is not going to be won on bringing in the uninsured.”