

ALAN GRAYSON V. THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY HACK

Greg Sargent reports the totally unsurprising fact that Alex Castellanos, one of CNN's talking heads, is sucking at the insurance industry teat.

CNN has acknowledged in a statement to me that a high-profile Republican commentator who frequently discusses health care on the air is also the media buyer for one of the ad campaigns bankrolled by America's Health Insurance Plans, the major industry trade group currently waging war against the White House and Dem reform proposals.

CNN tells me his ties to the industry will be disclosed in the future.

The CNN contributor, well-known GOP consultant Alex Castellanos, is best known for producing the racially-charged "Hands" ad, has repeatedly appeared on the network attacking Dem health care plans and the public option, which is strongly opposed by AHIP.

Castellanos's consulting firm, National Media, also recently placed over \$1 million of TV advertising for AHIP, according to info obtained by Media Matters. AHIP's most recent \$1 million ad buy attacks the health care plan as a threat to Medicare.

Given that news, take a close look at Alan Grayson's appearance on the Situation Room a few weeks ago. Castellanos keeps claiming there's a Republican plan. But, as Grayson points out, the plan Castellanos describes is simply a bunch of policies the insurance industry supports.

Seems to me CNN—in its newfound spirit of transparency—ought to give Grayson another opportunity to point out how Castellanos used a “news” show to pimp the industry’s policies.