JONATHAN GRUBER FAILED TO DISCLOSE HIS $392,600 CONTRACTS WITH HHS (UPDATED)

MIT health economist Jonathan Gruber has been the go-to source that all the health care bill apologists point to to defend otherwise dubious arguments. But he has consistently failed to disclose that he has had a sole-source contract with the Department of Health and Human Services since June 19, 2009 to consult on the "President's health reform proposal."

He is one source for the claim that the excise tax will result in raises for workers (though his underlying study is in-apt to the excise tax question). He is the basis for the argument that the Senate bill reduces families' risk—even if it remains totally unaffordable. Even Politico stenographer Mike Allen points to Gruber's research.

But none of the references to Gruber I've seen have revealed that Gruber has a $297,600 contract with HHS to produce,

> a technical memorandum on the estimated changes in health insurance coverage and associated costs and impacts to the government under alternative specifications of health system reform. The requirement includes developing estimates of various health reform proposals on health insurance coverage and cost. The alternative specifications to be considered will be derived from the **President's health reform proposal**. [my emphasis]

(h/t Mote Dai)

The **President's** health reform proposal? But I thought this was the Senate's health reform

proposal?!?!? (wink!)

Now, HHS says they had to put Dr. Gruber in charge of evaluating health care reform proposals because he's got,

> a proven micro-simulation model with the flexibility to ascertain the distribution of changes in health care spending and public and private sector health care costs due to a large variety of changes in health insurance benefit design, public program eligibility criteria, and tax policy.

Even assuming that Gruber is the only one in the world who can run these simulations, don't you think it's rather, um, dubious that the guy evaluating the heath care reform—for $300,000—is also the package's single biggest champion?

And no one has been transparent about this contract?

Update: Actually, Gruber failed to disclose his $392,600 contracts with HSS. The reference to ongoing work in the bigger, second one refers to a $95,000 contract he had from March 25, 2009 to July 25, 2009.