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Obama to Speak on Health Care Reform in Minneapolis;

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HIGHLIGHT: President Obama scheduled to speak on health care reform in Minneapolis today. A lively discussion on legal issues, criminal cases in the news; from free speech to child murders, to famous artists deep in debt, legal experts offer analysis and commentary. Hit by the recession many families opt for in-state universities, scholarships in order to access higher education.

FREDRICKA WHITFIELD, CNN CENTER: All right, big today, it was a big week after all, Wednesday; President Obama pushed health care reform on Capitol Hill and today, take a look, right here, opponents of the president's plan pushed back by the thousands. Here's a live look at what's happening right now in the nation's capitol. Our Kate Bolduan is there live, monitoring it all.

Kate, pretty good crowd.

KATE BOLDUAN, CNN NEWS CORRESPONDENT: It's a very big crowd, now, Fredricka. We actually -- we're right near the podium where this program, where the speakers are being held. And we moved near, we're on Third Street, here right near the capitol, to really see what's going on.

We've got a large part of this group was over at Freedom Plaza, that's about a dozen blocks away from where we are now. And they're all moving here, this way, in order to get to the capitol for this program, that from what we can understand, started about 2-1/2 hours early because so many people had showed up to really, to get to this event.

Now you can see signs, many people holding signs, many people really out here, speaking out -- speaking out, expressing their concerns. But in large part, this program, it's a three-day march on Washington, it's an annual event that is organized in large part by Freedom Works. It's a conservative advocacy group that supports lower taxes, smaller government, and broadly, it's many of the concerns that a lot of the people here.

But all really very excited as you can probably hear around me, all trying to get to this rally, and very excited all along the way, they say. What I've heard a lot from people are that Washington is not listening. And that's what I'm hearing a lot from people. And that's why they said they needed to come out here, today -- Fredricka.

WHITFIELD: And then what happens as they get closest to the podium or at least the end of the march. Who will they be hearing from today?

BOLDUAN: There's quite a large list of speakers, many from Freedom Works and other conservative groups, but they'll also be hearing from some conservative lawmakers. They'll be hearing from Congressman rice, Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn, as well as Senator Jim DeMint, through the day. They said the program is supposed to run until about 4:00 this

afternoon. The weather seems to be holding up. But we'll see exactly how things are going. It seems that there are many more people than some expected to turn out. So, they're all trying to get them onto the mall while the program is already beginning.

WHITFIELD: All right, Kate Baldwin, thanks so much from the nation's capitol, there and a pretty sizeable march taking place on the nation's capitol.

So, health care at the core there, and President Obama also taking his case for health care reform to the people in a very different way. Next hour, he is attending a rally in Minneapolis, he's trying to nix worries about the price tag. In his weekly address, the president says reform won't add to the deficit.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BARACK OBAMA (D), UNITED STATES PRESIDENT: As I've said over and over again, I will not sign a plan that adds one dime to our deficits, period. This plan will be paid for. The middle class will realize greater security, not higher taxes. And if we can successfully slow the growth of health care costs by just 1/10 of one percent each year, it will actually reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion over the long-term.

Affordable quality care within the reach of tens of millions of Americans who don't have it today, stability and security for the hundreds of millions who do, that's the reform we seek.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: So, we'll bring you the president's speech live from Minneapolis as it happens. He is scheduled to begin speaking about 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

All right, NATO says two U.S. troops were killed in Afghanistan today, when their patrol hit a roadside bomb. Defense Secretary Robert Gates is expected to order additional units to Afghanistan soon to deal with such explosives. The Pentagon says the number of attacks by roadside bombs is up 350 percent over the year 2007. A U.S. military official tells CNN as many as 3,000 explosives experts may be deployed.

And on top of that, the U.S. commander for Afghanistan is expected to request thousands more troops, soon. His appeal may run into political roadblocks in Washington, however. Here now is CNN's Tom Foreman.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

TOM FOREMAN, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): American troops are facing increasingly hot fire in Afghanistan. And even as he tries to send help, their commander in chief is under assault, too. President Obama again made it clear he wants more military pressure on the Taliban, just as promised in his campaign.

OBAMA: In pursuit of al Qaeda and its extremist allies, we will never falter.

FOREMAN: The president has already been moving 21,000 extra troops into Afghanistan, for a total of 68,000 by this year's end. But even before this latest expected request for more, on Capitol Hill, top players in the president's own party were waving red flags, noting, public support for the war is plummeting, especially among Democrats.

REP NANCY PELOSI (D-CA), SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE: I don't think there's a great deal of support for sending in the troops to Afghanistan in the country or in the Congress.

FOREMAN: The influential head of the Arms Services Committee, Michigan's Carl Levin, is the latest, saying no more American troops until he sees more Afghan soldiers on the lines.

SEN CARL LEVIN (D-MI), ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN: This is an army that is willing to fight and take on the Taliban. What they need is much larger numbers, they need training, they need the equipment and we have fallen short in providing them with all of that.

FOREMAN (on camera): But, "Keeping Them Honest," we contacted military and foreign affairs analysts at several top think tanks with extensive knowledge of Afghanistan. Some of them are more in favor of the U.S. intervention there, some of them less so, but regardless, all of them said expecting Afghan security forces to dramatically step up is a tall order, at best.

(voice-over): There are currently only 90,000 Afghan troops -- the widely agreed upon goal for security, 240,000. The Cato Institute calls that "unrealistic any time soon." The Foreign Policy Research Institute said there is a "mismatch between the president's strategy" and the resources he has on the battlefield.

The Foreign Policy Initiative says training more Afghans is a good idea, but "not a substitute for U.S. forces." And the RAND Corporation says, "The bottom line is, we don't have enough troops, U.S. or Afghan."

So, it appears the president is increasingly caught in a vice between growing resistance at home, an advancing enemy on the battlefield, and a political clock that, on this anniversary weekend of 9/11, is ticking loudly.

Tom Foreman, CNN, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WHITFIELD: And be sure to watch CNN tonight for an AC-360 special report "Inside the Battle Zone," Afghanistan's elections, the Taliban resurgence, and mounting American casualties, tonight 8:00 Eastern Time, right here on CNN.

All right, life after 9/11 is the subject of a special hour today, in the CNN NEWSROOM, specifically national security. Is this a safer nation since those attacks? Plus, do some of the safeguards in place to protect the country actually infringe on your civil liberties? We want to hear from you, "The State of U.S. Security," a special hour today, 4:00 Eastern Time. Send your comments to my blog and FaceBook, as well. All right, the shout heard around Capitol Hill and beyond -- Congressman Joe Wilson heckles the president during his health care address. He may have apologized, Wilson, that is, but he's not backing down.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REP JOE WILSON (R), NORTH CAROLINA: On these issues I will not be muzzled. I will speak up and speak loudly against this risky plan.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: So who is Joe Wilson? And will his outburst put him in the political penalty box?

WHITFIELD: All right, he yelled his way right into the middle of the health care debate, by calling President Obama liar. But just who is South Carolina Congressman Joe Wilson? Our Brian Todd reveals more about the man whose shout was heard around the nation.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BRIAN TODD, CNN CORRESPONDENT: An obscure back bencher injects himself literally into the great health care debate.

WILSON: You lie!

(BOOS)

OBAMA: That's not true.

TODD: An uncharacteristic outburst, or was this part of Joe Wilson's M.O.? Yes, on both counts according to journalists who have covered him in South Carolina.

They describe a soft-spoken, flag-waving congressman who doesn't get into the forefront of many high-profile debates. But when he does feel passionately he's not afraid to show it.

Witness this exchange on C-Span several years ago when Democratic Congressman Bob Filner opined that the U.S. had supplied Saddam Hussein with weapons of mass destruction.

WILSON: We never gave stuff like that to...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I think you need to read your military history, Joe.

WILSON: That is absurd. And you know, this hatred of America by some people is just outrageous. And you need to get over that.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Hatred of America?

WILSON: Yes, a hatred of America to say something like that. UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Are you accusing me?

WILSON: Yes. Accusing us of giving biological weapons to Iraq, that is outrageous. You shouldn't say that. And you need to look into it and you need to retract it.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I had a congressman...

WILSON: That was a hateful comment that you made.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It is a true comment.

WILSON: That is not right. And you shouldn't say stuff like that.

TODD: An early and fervent supporter of the Iraq War, Wilson, observers say, gets his fire stoked by just about any military issue. His four sons all served. One, an Iraq veteran, took time out from running for attorney general back home to defend his father's comments to the president.

ALAN WILSON, JOE WILSON'S SON: People are just frustrated about health care, especially in South Carolina, and that frustration manifested itself last night on the floor of the U.S. Congress.

TODD: Joe Wilson's district is heavily Republican. Observers say an influx of Hispanic immigrants in recent years has sparked tensions over jobs and health care, tensions that had been weighing on the mind of the former immigration attorney.

WILSON: People who have come to our country and violated laws, we should not be providing full health care services.

TODD: Wilson once worked for legendary Republican Senator Strom Thurmond and the late Congressman Floyd Spence, who analysts say mentored him on the politics of constituent service.

JOHN O'CONNOR, REPORTER, THE STATE NEWSPAPER: Congressman Wilson is kind of the traditional South Carolina congressman who, you know, focuses on keeping the people at home happy and then, you know, when folks have an issue back in the district, they can call up their congressman. The congressman will take care of that.

TODD: That's a formula, observers say, that keeps you in office in South Carolina. Since taking over Floyd Spence's seat in 2001, Wilson had not been seriously challenged until last year.

TODD (on camera): His opponent then, Rob Miller, is running against him again. And Democratic Party officials say since Wilson's outburst, Miller's been able to raise several hundred thousand dollars for his campaign. But Wilson says his own response from constituents back home has been overwhelmingly positive.

Brian Todd, CNN, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE) WHITFIELD: Congressman Wilson has also seen an influx of campaign cash. A day after formally apologizing to President Obama, the South Carolina Republican took to the web, with the message to his supporters.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

WILSON: They want to silence anyone who speaks out against it. They made it clear they want to defeat me and pass the plan. I need your help now. If you agree with me that the government-run health plan is bad medicine for America, then I ask for your support. Please go to JoeWilsonForCongress.com and contribute to my effort to defeat the proponents of government-run health care.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: And it seems to be working. A national Republican fundraising committee says that Congressman Joe Wilson has actually raised hundreds of thousands of dollars since Wednesday night's outburst. So, let's talk more about all of this. I'm joined by CNN Radio Capitol Hill correspondent, Lisa Des Jardins, where a huge rally there on Capitol Hill. A lot of folks who have been very vocal about not liking the health care proposal that the president has been pitching. So, just to forewarn our audience that there just might be some yelling about that kind of statement while we're talking about Congressman Joe Wilson.

All right, so Lisa, you actually have some experience covering Joe Wilson when in South Carolina. He's not new to South Carolina, however he might be new to the national spotlight. Did this -- I guess, display this week, seem kind of in concert with the Joe Wilson they know in South Carolina?

LISA DES JARDINS, CNN RADIO CAPITOL HILL CORRESPONDENT: Well, I'll tell you first of all, if you can hear me, this crowd is not just here about health care, but they're here about a lot of issues that they're obviously upset about.

Right now they're chanting, "tell the truth." They've been talking a lot to me about what they think CNN should air and here you hear them chanting.

Let's talk about Joe Wilson. I've covered him for a long time and I'll tell you, he is a man who does care about things like honor, doing the right thing. He's also a man who displays a reaction (INAUDIBLE) something bothers him, and it builds up, I have seen him get passionate and fiery about it before. So, it didn't shock me. I think people who know him, know him as more of a mild-mannered guy...

WHITFIELD: Hey, Lisa, I'm just going to interrupt you for a minute because the crowd is kind of overshadowing your words, so I'm going to ask you to speak a little but louder, we're going to give it one more shot to see if we can hear you a little bit more clearly. So is he, Joe Wilson now, a hot potato on Capitol Hill? Are fellow Republicans distancing themselves from him? DES JARDINS: Yeah, I don't think they're uncomfortable with what happened, Fredricka. But they're not turning their backs on him. Clearly, Democrats are making a move, they want an apology on the floor of the House. They say if he does not give that apology, that they will be pushing a resolution to admonish Congressman Wilson. So, next week will be an important week for Congressman Wilson to decide, does he want to give an apology on the House floor? He's already apologized to the White House, does he want to take the next step or does he want to face a potential resolution against him?

WHITFIELD: (INAUDIBLE)

DES JARDINS: Before we cut out -- I want to try something to the crowd. Can I ask you guys something? Let me ask you guys something. I got a question.

(CROWD CHANTING)

I got a question everybody, I got a question. I want to bring this all together. You guys, we're on air right now. I want to ask the crowd -- what -- we want to ask you...

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Let them speak, we don't need to be like this. Let them speak.

DES JARDINS: What do you think of Congressman Joe Wilson?

(CHEERS)

DES JARDINS: There are people who strongly support Congressman Wilson, Fredricka, and many of them are right here.

WHITFIELD: All right, Lisa Des Jardins, thanks so much for trying to compete with the noise just in terms of the audio, sort of way, quality of audio. So, we will find out perhaps in the coming weeks, whether indeed the push that congressman Joe Wilson is getting from some members on Capitol Hill, whether he will actually take to the floor and give a verbal apology to the chamber, there.

We know already, as Lisa was underscoring there, even though it may have been a little bit difficult to hear her that Congressman Joe Wilson did reach out to the president by telephone, did offer an apology. And the president did accept. But

this story is far from over.

So, let's check some of the other top stories, right now. Vice President Joe Biden expected to join mourners honoring two fallen firefighters next hour in Los Angeles. The two died last month when their truck plunged off a mountain road, as they searched for an escape route during the largest wildfire in L.A. County history. Thousands are expected to attend their official memorial at Dodger Stadium.

And a major policy shift on North Korea. The Obama administration says it is willing to sit down one-on-one with the regime of Kim Jong- Il. The goal of the talks apparently is not a U.S./North Korean deal, rather it's to coax the north back to six nation talks on its nuclear program.

And "Discovery's" crew has to endure some more flight time before enjoying a reunion with their families. Bad weather over Florida forced the space shuttle to actually touchdown in California last night. Getting the shuttle back to the Kennedy Space Center will cost \$1 million. Another check of the top stories in about 20 minutes from now.

All right, let's check in with our Reynolds Wolf.

So, we know because of weather, at least in Florida, that's why they had to change the location to California for that landing spot, but I'm seeing you before the "Hurricane Headquarters" banner which tells me you want to talk about that first.

REYNOLDS WOLF, CNN METEOROLOGIST: Yeah, you know, it's suitable for just possibly a little while. We often show this when there are things active in the tropics and there is something out there. It's not all too active, I mean, it's a tropical storm, we're talking about Fred, Fred. But I'll tell you it's barely a storm if that. I mean, this thing is just falling apart where it's encountering quite a bit shear. Upper-levels here coming from the south and southwest and that's really ripping this thing apart, so. I would guess that by the time next update comes around later on this afternoon, I would expect this may just be a closed low over the center of circulation, not a storm at all. So, that should be moving off into history.

(WEATHER REPORT)

All right, Fred, you're up to speed.

WHITFIELD: That's nice. Nice little mix of whether, there. Appreciate it.

WOLF: You bet.

WHITFIELD: Thanks, Reynolds.

All right, the high court hears arguments in the anti-Hillary Clinton movie. The case could lead to changes in how political campaigns are actually financed. Our legal guys will weigh in on this one.

WHITFIELD: Wincing from global losses, many airlines are cutting back on routes. Less flights, or fewer flights means fewer seats for passengers. Our Richelle Carey has some tips for to you help your get your destination in this day's "On the Go" segment.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

RICHELLE CAREY, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): It's hard enough to find a flight, but beginning this fall, it is going to get tougher.

GENEVIEVE SHAW BROWN, TRAVELOCITY.COM: Airlines are cutting down the capacity because of a slowdown in both international and domestic travel, particularly in the area of business travel.

CAREY: Some international routes have already been cut.

BROWN: Delta is suspending nonstop service from Atlanta to Seoul and to Shanghai and from JFK to Edinburgh. Virgin Atlantic is cutting the Chicago O'Hare to London route.

CAREY: Domestic flights will be scaled back, too.

BROWN: Airtran is a domestic carrier. They will be suspending daily service from Orlando to Washington Dulles, and

instead flying only on Fridays and Saturdays.

CAREY: This means fewer options in planning your trip.

BROWN: You are competing now for fewer seats. So, you want to be booking in advance.

CAREY: Also, double-check your itinerary. Sometimes airlines add a connecting flight.

BROWN: If you pay for a nonstop and then are put on a connecting flight, I would try to negotiate with your airline to see if there's any sort of travel voucher or perhaps partial refund that you can receive.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WHITFIELD: If you thought a lot of money was spent in the last presidential campaign, hold on. Right now, the U.S. Supreme Court is considering a case that could undo campaign financing restrictions. And as CNN's Elaine Quijano explains, the case is based on an anti- Hillary Clinton movie.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

FROM CITIZENS UNITED AD FOR "HILLARY, THE MOVIE": Who is Hillary Clinton?

ELAINE QUIJANO, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): It started small. During last year's presidential primaries, a federal court said campaign finance laws barred this ad for an anti-Hillary Clinton movie by an advocacy group, a non-profit corporation.

FROM CITIZENS UNITED AD FOR "HILLARY, THE MOVIE": If you thought you knew everything about Hillary Clinton, wait 'til you see the movie.

QUIJANO: But now, the Supreme Court could make a monumental change in how money influences politics, deciding, in the name of free speech, whether there should be any limits at all on corporate campaign spending.

FRED WERTHEIMER, DEMOCRACY 21: Allowing corporations to flood our elections and use campaign expenditures to buy influence would fundamentally undermine our democracy.

QUIJANO: Fred Wertheimer of Democracy 21 warns overturning a century of precedents would shut average citizens out of the political process.

WERTHEIMER: The little guy would have no role here, because the dominant force in our politics, the dominant force in Washington decision-making, would become corporations.

QUIJANO: But David Bossee of Citizens United, the group behind the anti-Hillary Clinton movie, argues that anyone pooling resources, including unions, the health industry, advocacy groups like the National Rifle Association, has free speech rights.

DAVID BOSSEE, CITIZENS UNITED: I actually went out and looked for this fight, because I don't believe that the government's position, I don't believe that the government should have the right to impede people's entry into the process. And that's what the Federal Election Commission is trying to do here, squelch our first Amendment Rights.

QUIJANO (on camera): Interestingly, the American Civil Liberties Union agrees. A final ruling is expected in a couple of months, and legal observers say conservatives could hold the key with enough votes to possibly declare much of current campaign finance law unconstitutional.

Elaine Quijano, CNN, the Supreme Court.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

WHITFIELD: So, at the heart of that matter, the first amendment which means we need to turn to our legal guys to delve in a little bit further, here. Avery Friedman is a civil rights attorney and law professor.

Good to see you.

And Richard Herman is a New York criminal defense attorney and law professor.

Good to see you, as well.

RICHARD HERMAN, CIVIL RIGHTS ATTY: Hi Fred.

WHITFIELD: Something tells me, Avery, are we working on your audio?

FRIEDMAN: I don't know.

WHITFIELD: OK, there we go, I hear you now.

FRIEDMAN: Are we on right now?

WHITFIELD: I was a little worried there. All right, well let's talk about this movie kind of at the core, but at the same time, first amendment really at the core. We heard from some of the justices, hearing arguments and issuing questions. So Avery, what did you hear out of the justices?

FRIEDMAN: Well, this was like WWF, in the Supreme Court. I mean, we had the most, among the most powerful lawyers and a very active panel, from chief justice Roberts to our brand-new justice, Sonya Sotomayor, pounding the advocates with questions.

And it really turns on you and I, Fredricka, have rights under the First Amendment to speak out. The question here, do those same rights apply to corporations and government. And there's been a limitation.

WHITFIELD: And the labor unions.

FRIEDMAN: And unions also. So the question is, will unions and corporations have the same rights under the Bill of Rights, under a freedom of speech. That's where the case turns.

WHITFIELD: And Richard, this really has very long tentacles. Because this could really impact how campaigns are financed. Who wins, who can afford to be in the battle, et cetera, that's really at the core here as well?

RICHARD HERMAN, CRIMINAL DEFENSE ATTORNEY: Absolutely, Fred. Our campaign, our election process is the core to our government. And you know, there's going to be massive, may not be disclosure requirements any more. Who knows where this is going to end up? That's why the Supreme Court was so -- so taken aback last time. That they requested further argument on it. But Justice Kennedy is going to be the swing vote, Avery, where he goes, that's where this is going to come down.

FRIEDMAN: Actually, that's exactly right. You know what, McCain- Feingold -and this is my prediction - goes out the window, the substantive parts, 5 to 4, in the next couple of months. I hate to see it.

HERMAN: Sad, very sad.

FRIEDMAN: That's what I'm looking at.

WHITFIELD: Now let's shift gears and talk about some Pennsylvania judges and putting the number of young people into juvenile facilities. And then, receiving money for it. But first, there were some guilty pleas, and now, a change of course.

Richard, what's going on? Now it's not guilty, many of the judges are imposing, how can they do that?

HERMAN: It's not just the -

WHITFIELD: Judges, no less.

HERMAN: Fred, I have to relax. I had to get medicated for this one. Because this is beyond the words in our dictionary, there are not words to describe the corruption of these judges, which go to the heart of our judicial system. When the judges are broken, the system crumbles. The reason they withdrew their pleas is because a federal judge refused to accept the plea

agreement that they presented. That's why. These judges are lower than animals. They are the worst form of predator out there. These people should be stripped and I'll tell you something else -- Avery, the district attorney's office should be investigated. The district attorney should never have entered into these deals where these kids were getting thrown into prison.

WHITFIELD: So you are saying they were complicit, because we're talking about \$3 million that was exchanged, allegedly?

HERMAN: Yes.

WHITFIELD: Right?

FRIEDMAN: Every time a judge sentenced a kid, there was essentially the allegations of a kickback, almost \$3 million.

And Richard, I'm glad he's medicated, because the truth is a lot of people have reacted in this fashion because it is truly something that, if you hired screenwriters, you couldn't come up with this awful scenario. Children have suffered, they will suffer for the rest of their lives. Now the 48-count indictment, Fredricka, on RICO, against these two guys, the worst is yet to come for these guys. We have one very tough judge with Edwin Kosik, who is overseeing this case.

WHITFIELD: Wow.

HERMAN: Fred, these judges were sending the children, these minors to juvenile detention facilities and getting kickbacks by the facilities to do it. It's outrageous.

WHITFIELD: OK, wait a minute, am I hearing we are out of time on this segment, Joe? My producer, OK.

Then we have save Annie Lebovitz, because we've got it talk about her in our legal segment.

HERMAN: OK.

WHITFIELD: We'll see you again in a few minutes.

FRIEDMAN: Right.

WHITFIELD: We're talking at issue, her portfolio, as well as her real estate, she might lose it all, but wait, a reprieve. So we'll get into that, Avery and Richard, in a moment.

All right, President Obama ready to rally for health care reform, live coverage.

WHITFIELD: A look at the top stories this hour. America's ongoing debate over health care reform grows even louder. Take a look right now. Live pictures from Washington, D.C., where thousands of protestors have turned out to rally against President Obama's health care reform plan. And in general, rally against big or growing government. They consider the government as such, right now, out of control on spending.

President Obama is pressing for action on health care reform. He's expected to speak at a rally in Minneapolis at about 2:00 today. Our Elaine Quijano is already in Minneapolis awaiting the president's arrival. And a pretty sizeable turnout there as well, Elaine.

ELAINE QUIJANO, CNN WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: That's right. People are continuing to stream in even as we speak, Fredricka. We're waiting on a crowd size estimate from White House officials. But I can tell you fresh off the president's primetime address to a joint session of Congress, the president very much wants to keep the momentum going on health care. That's why he has come here to Minneapolis, at this public rally.

Minnesota, interestingly, is a state with one of the lowest uninsured rates in the nation. Just under 9 percent of people here do not have health care coverage. It's here that the president has chosen to try out a new variation, if you will, on his sales pitch. This is something that we heard him highlight this morning in his weekly Internet and radio address. The president aiming his pitch squarely at the middle class, cited a new Treasury report, estimating over the next 10 years, about half of all Americans under the age of 65 will lose their health care coverage. And the president broke that number down even further. Take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BARACK OBAMA, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: If you're under the age of 21 today, chances are more than half that you'll find yourself uninsured at some point in that time. And more than one-third of Americans will go without coverage for longer than one year. I refuse to allow that future to happen. The United States of America, no one should have to worry that they'll go without health insurance, not for one year, not for one month, not for one day. And once I sign my health reform plan into law. they won't.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

QUIJANO: So the president's bottom-line message today, that losing health insurance is something that can happen to anyone. And that's why he says health care reform cannot wait. Republicans, meantime, Fred, continue to argue, of course, that the president's proposals will simply be too costly. We can expect the president to address those concerns today at the rally in just a bit, as well.

WHITFIELD: Elaine, thanks so much, appreciate that from Minneapolis. We'll be covering that live as it happens out of Minneapolis.

All right, a Boy Scout from Maryland is our Hero of the Week: 16- year-old Alex Griffith took his Eagle Scout service project overseas to Siberia.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE) ANNOUNCER: This is CNN Heroes.

ALEX GRIFFITH, I was abandoned at hospital No. 20 at birth. I was adopted at 11 1/2 months old.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: The first time he saw Alex he had rickets and he was malnourished. We fell in love with him immediately. It was, there's my son. Let's go home, son.

A. GRIFFITH: Hospital No. 20 gave me a chance to survive and I wanted to give something back.

I'm Alex Griffith and I'm building a playground at the hospital where I was adopted from.

Everyone get plates.

I've been a Boy Scout for five years. I wanted to build a playground for my Eagle project. The old playground at hospital No. 20 had a rough field swing with a wooden seat and a sandbox, which is actually mud pit because of all the rain.

We had to design the playground.

These are the double glide slide. And ordered the playground and then followed it over to build it. Volunteers from all over the world helped me build this playground. All of us adopted from Russia have not and probably will never forget our birthplace.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE (through translator): I like this playground, because when you slide on it, all the sadness goes away.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: It makes me very proud. He's becoming an example to others that anything is possible if you don't give up.

GRIFFITH: It made me really happy just being here. That's all I can say.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WHITFIELD: Find out more about Alex and other CNN Heroes on our website. Log on to CNN.com/heroes. Coming October 1st, we'll announce the top 10 CNN heroes of 2009.

WHITFIELD: All right, my second-favorite moment of the hour, is when I get to see Avery and Richard again. Our legal guys are back.

Let's talk about two cases that couldn't be more different. First, a Sunday school teacher, Melissa Huckabee, she's already been charged with kidnapping and killing an eight-year-old, Sandra Cantu. And now the death penalty is hanging over her head.

So, Richard, what happened?

HERMAN: What happened is -

WHITFIELD: Why is this case now escalated to death penalty talk?

HERMAN: It's escalated because you had a prosecutor who had vision and guts here. You have a horrific crime. You have in that jurisdiction, what's called special circumstances, or aggravating circumstances. You had a rape commissioned at the time of the murder on this young, poor young woman, as well as the age, eight years old. It's really not looking too good for Miss Huckabee here, they're very confident with their prosecution. They must have great forensics, also.

WHITFIELD: And Avery, speaking of forensics, are we also talking about evidence that points in the direction of some drugging? Allegedly drugging of this little girl?

FRIEDMAN: Yeah. This is amazing. Not only do they have that evidence, Fredricka, but they also have evidence that Melissa also did this to others. And I agree, San Joaquin district attorneys took the courageous step. There are special circumstances, we are looking at death penalty. I think you probably know from the criminal defense perspective, not mine, what the defense is going to be here.

WHITFIELD: Wow, so maybe drugging of this girl allegedly, or possibly drugging of another little girl.

Let's talk about another case, completely different. But this case is shocking because we're talking about a famed photographer, Annie Leibovitz and we're talking about her \$24 million in her personal portfolio, as well as real estate and property, all of it on the line. She gets a reprieve.

Why, Avery?

FRIEDMAN: Well Art Capital, which is the plaintiff in this case, which pursued the claim in court because Annie defaulted. She didn't make the loan payments. They worked a deal where Art Capital is now going to be her, quote, "agent", handling the sale of property. She also owns about three or four homes, too. So she got a reprieve. I think that's how you put it. I don't know how she's ultimately going to make the obligations here. But at least she's got a lifesaver for the time being.

WHITFIELD: Yes, so Richard, there was an October 1 deadline, she needs to cough up all of this money that she has allegedly owes. She would lose everything that she had put up for collateral. But what, still, could potentially happen with her estate?

HERMAN: She could still default. They just renegotiated it to buy her a little more time. But obviously she was living way large, and way over her ability to spend, it was a \$24 million loan. It was called, it was in default. When you borrow against art, it's usually done short-term. She did it too long. And this type of economy, the value of the art doesn't hold itself. It takes too long to sell these pieces. And the lenders got scared.

FRIEDMAN: No matter how iconic she is, it's still art and Richard's right.

WHITFIELD: I remember reading a quote from someone who worked with her, and said she was a brilliant talent, an artistic mind, but that doesn't necessarily mean that you're a brilliant, great, business mind.

FRIEDMAN: Exactly right.

HERMAN: She better buy some more scan discs and a few more cameras.

WHITFIELD: All right. They're yelling at me. We've got to go.

FRIEDMAN: All right.

WHITFIELD: You know I love our time together. All right. Avery, Richard, good to see you. Thanks so much, have a

great weekend.

FRIEDMAN: See you soon. Take care.

HERMAN: Thanks, Fred.

WHITFIELD: It's supposed to be an exciting time for students, right? But the rising cost of college tuition these days can take a toll on the freshman fund. One family invited us along for the full ride.

WHITFIELD: Going off to college is an exciting time for freshmen and, of course, their families. But it's costing a lot more these days. The average tuition at a four-year college, public college, is up as much as \$1,400 over last year. And that's forcing some families to change their choices. I had a chance to follow one family through the process, all the way to move-in day.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

WHITFIELD (voice over): Move-in day for college freshman Pressley Chakales, to place she never expected would bring so much happiness and harmony.

PRESSLEY CHAKALES, UNIV. OF GEORGIA FRESHMAN: I've been working all day getting my room together but I like it. I'm excited.

WHITFIELD: Also excited, her parents, Peter and Ann.

PETER CHAKALES, FATHER OF FRESHMAN: This is like a ride to a suburb when you live in Atlanta, so she's close.

WHITFIELD: But the hour-long ride to the University of Georgia, in Athens, didn't come without detours. Like thousands of American households on tighter budgets, savings and 401(k)s taking double-digit losses, family plans are forced to be flexible.

PRESSLEY CHAKALES: I was really, really completely set on going out of state. WHITFIELD: Oh, we remember, we first met the Chakales last spring. College acceptance letters were coming in. Along with the prospect of a full scholarship available to Georgia students with a 3.0 GPA or higher planning to attend school in-state. But at the time, Presley and her parents were not seeing eye to eye.

(On camera): So your heart tells you one thing, but the purse strings tell you another?

PRESSLEY CHAKALES: Yeah, definitely.

WHITFIELD: What are these conversations like with mom and dad when you all try to come to grips about a happy medium?

PRESSLEY CHAKALES: They can get heated.

WHITFIELD: That was last March. Now?

PRESSLEY CHAKALES: I ended up getting into UGA off of the wait list and my decision immediately changed to back in state, because I with as going to UNC Wilmington. But I switched back to UGA to save an indescribable amount of money.

WHITFIELD: A huge relief for her parents. Even though they spent years saving for her higher education, the thought of unloading at least \$25,000 a year for four years of out of state undergrad was stressful beyond words.

P. CHAKALES: Well, it would have been very, very tough, it was frightening. The financial part was absolutely frightening.

WHITFIELD: Staying in state, able to benefit from the Georgia full academic scholarship, cut their expenses by more than half. Out of pocket now? \$10,000 a year for Pressley's housing, books and other fees. The benefits of their family decision? Endless.

ANN CHAKALES, MOTHER OF FRESHMAN: I think she'll be able to study abroad for a semester if she wants to. And that probably would not have happened if she had gone out of state.

WHITFIELD: The Chakales are confident Pressley will maintain a 3.0 or better to keep the state scholarship until graduation. But the family savings plan continues. In three years, it will be Presley's younger brother's turn.

A. CHAKALES: We'll probably start prepping for our son a little bit earlier.

WHITFIELD: In hopes that he, too, qualifies for the same kind of in- state help.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

WHITFIELD: In-state students at four-year public schools are paying nearly \$6,200 this year, according to the nonprofit College Board's annual survey of college costs. The cost to go out of state is nearly \$11,000. About two-thirds of all undergraduates get some kind of financial aid. We wish her and her family the best.

A star football player making headlines off the field. He's facing allegations of abuse leveled by a reality TV star. Prosecutors now deciding what next.

WHITFIELD: A look at our top stories. A health care reform debate taking hold in the South and Midwest today, Democratic lawmakers and supporters are holding a pro reform rally in Orlando, Florida. You see the images there. And President Obama is holding one, about to, in Minneapolis. We expect him to arrive and we expect to hear him speak about an hour from now.

An NFL linebacker Shawne Merriman will not face criminal charges. The San Diego district attorney said there is insufficient evidence. Merriman was accused of choking reality TV show personality, Tila Tequila and holding her against her will at his home.

National security after 9/11 is the subject of a special hour today in the CNN NEWSROOM. Is this a safer nation since those attacks? Plus do some of the safeguards in place to protect this country infringe on your civil liberties?

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