# A Town Hall Meeting: The Ruckus In Ruckersville [VIDEOS]

August 11, 2009 By Shawn Decker

**While Senators and Congressmen are on break, they're taking the opportunity to hold town hall meetings to discuss the healthcare reform that is being proposed. The insurance industry is also taking advantage of the opportunity as well, mobilizing their forces and rallying folks to kill any discussions of the real life consequences/concerns about of our current profitable-for-some system.**

The news coverage of these town hall battles has been abundant. Here's a clip of "Smirky" Sean Hannity praising a "concerned citizen's" outburst at one of these meetings.

I've been watching some clips on The Rachel Maddow Show, so when I heard that my Congressman, Tom Perriello, was going to be holding these meetings, I had to travel 10 miles up the road to Ruckersville for... *The Ruckus in Ruckersville!*

The sign-holding that greeted me upon entering the Ruckersville Elementary School reminded me of the live pro wrestling events I am so fond of. I know how hard it is to make one of those things and have them be legible from more than 100 feet away. And there's no spell-check with a bold tip Sharpee. So a little of the magic of the town hall meeting was stripped away when signs were being given out to people on both sides of the debate.

Lame.

My attitude is that, if you really think "Obamacare = Death Sentence For Grandma" is such, you should have some Sharpee ink on your hands that said you put in the time. Actually, *that* sign was sloppy, and I had no questions as to whether the man holding it was the arteest. I know, I know, "Shawn, why didn't you get a picture of that?" Well, I don't have enough clotting factor to brave that photo op and, quite frankly, the sign was kind of scary. His grandma probably does have a death sentence- the hard-earned kind.

But that, for some, is the point. To scare the hell out of people. One of my Tool Academy Alumni, Rep. Virginia "Crazy Like A" Foxx, got on board to ring the death tolls for the elderly.

So, what exactly happened at the Ruckus in Ruckersville?

About 250 people gathered. The local news said that the majority were conservative, but I'm thinking that most of the people who weren't sneering or shouting were in favor of something being done, or getting genuine questions answered by their representative in the House. Perriello himself said- when the one microphone they had on hand wasn't shorting out- that as it stands now, he'd vote "No"... but wants to be a "Yes". He seemed open to a good plan, but not willing to just sign anything because he's a Democratic congressman, having voted no on the Bailout and yes on the Stimulus.

He was boo'd for the Stimulus, which he thought was necessary to prevent the entire United States from falling into California's fiscal position.

I don't pretend to know everything about the healthcare reform, but I do know that whatever goes through will not put Sarah Palin's child with Down Syndrome in front of a Death Panel, as she stated on her Facebook page. The scare tactics are out of control as to what could happen if our evil government tries to encroach on Mister Roger's Hugs & Healthcare monopoly, and irrational fears are being stoked because there's a lot at stake.

What bothered me were people who grandstanded on the mic. I wonder where they imagined they were as they spoke- on cable talk show? Jerry Springer? The mic was supposed to be used for a question before being passed to Perriello, but most times it was taken hostage. Maybe Bill Clinton should moderate all these debates... okay, bad idea.

But so is the idea of handing someone a microphone. In pageants, the host always holds the microphone, and for good reason- it's not un-American to cut some blabbermouth off. If it's good enough for Miss America, it's good enough for Ruckersville Elementary School. Plus, the event was only an hour and about 50 people lined up to ask a question. So when one ass asked 3 questions, and didn't even get to the first one until the five minute mark, it was quite painful.

Probably the most succinct person on the mic was a guy with Down's Syndrome. He had a stutter, that cheap-ass microphone didn't help his cause. I'm not being a dick, that's how it went down, and I'm telling this story not to be a dick, but for a reason. Glad you're back with me. He told Tom that he would like the healthcare reform to not overlook those with mental disabilities.

Everyone clapped.

When Perriello said that the VA was a federally-run health care system that has provided the best healthcare for our veterans because they deserve nothing less... everyone clapped. My question is this- don't we all deserve decent healthcare that doesn't go up 20% from one year to the next?

A self-described "conservative leaning" man in his thirties was upset that some in attendance wore blue tape on their arms to show support for reform. He said that he's had a couple friends who were diagnosed with cancer, and came out of treatment fine. He was worried about the financial toll of healthcare reform affecting our nation's ingenuity.... All I could wonder was how he would feel if those friends didn't have decent healthcare and had to sell everything to cover their

chemotherapy because their insurance “found a loophole” and decided to poke their dicks through it and subsequently screw their client into the poorhouse?

There’s no quick fix, but something *has* to be done, and real concerns over what sucks about the proposed bill need to be heard, studied and rectified. I have faith my Congressman, and wouldn’t wish his job on anyone. I mean, really, he kept his cool. Even when he was talking about the 6-figure expense of a woman who has a child premmaturely and how decent prenatal care could lessen the likelihood of a child being born early, only to have some idiot shout, “Abortion!”

Maybe it was as bad as the clips on TV warned me. But still, overall, aside from the morons, I was glad I went. The people who spoke, whose minds were already made up one way or the other, seemed transparent. Perriello did a good job of explaining the reality of the health care system, both already in place and what is being proposed. If I can think of a cool sign to make I just might go again tonight, when he does it all over again here in Charlottesville.

Maybe I’ll make an “I’M HERE TO SAVE TRIG PALIN!” sign. Or maybe I’ll just go to listen and learn, and hope something happens because I fear the position that other positoids- who are walking “pre-existing conditions”- face with our current health insurance industry. Doing nothing is great if you got it made- and I think that’s why so many resources are being put into spreading fear and lies among people for whom not a whole lot would actually change.

As for Palin’s comments, in *my* America, “Death Panel” should only be used when referring to the panel of judges on American Idol. And I’m talking about the classic panel of Simon, “Dawg” Jackson and Paula Abdul.

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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