# Higher Premiums for Unprotected Sex?

July 23, 2009 By Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.

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Rep. Steve Buyer (R-Ind.) offered an eyebrow-raising proposal during the review of health care legislation by the Energy and Commerce Committee, which he serves on.

As originally reported in *Roll Call*, here's what he's quoted as saying: "Someone who smokes, drinks, participates in bad conduct and behavior, unprotected sex, maybe bad things happen to them, maybe they should pay higher premiums ... That is a radical thought, isn't it?"

It is a radical thought, but not the good kind. This kind of radical thinking is exactly what gets in the way of real solutions to real problems. Punishing people has never been a great motivator. Besides, how would this be enforced?

Prevention is the key to reducing health care costs. What would really be a radical thought is massive federal funding of programs nationwide to educate our society about safer sex and harm reduction.

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