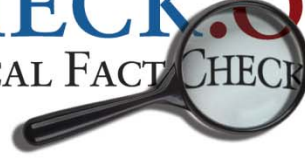




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JUST THE FACTS!

TITLE: "HOME-STRETCH HAIR RAISERS"

EPISODE #: 42

HOST

Welcome back to the Just the Facts! the weekly vid-cast from FactCheck.org. I'm Emi Kolawole and it's not Halloween yet, but you wouldn't know it looking at the campaign trail. The attack ads have grown fangs, the robo-calls are choking your phone lines, and spam is drowning your inbox.

VIDEO: MCCAIN-PALIN WEB AD "ACORN"

So, with that, we start with this web ad from the McCain-Palin campaign about ACORN:

ANNOUNCER

But now, ACORN is in trouble...Massive voter fraud. And the Obama campaign paid more than \$800,000 to an ACORN front for get out the vote efforts.

HOST

We find no evidence to support the claim that ACORN is guilty of ballot fraud. Workers for ACORN have been accused repeatedly of voter *registration* fraud. But the largest case to date found that ACORN had actually been cheated by workers who listed fake names instead of canvassing for real, unregistered voters. The Republican prosecuting attorney in the case said, "This scheme was not intended to permit illegal voting. Instead, the defendants cheated their employer to get paid for work they did not actually perform." As for the Obama campaign's donations to a front-group, it's true the campaign paid Citizens Services Incorporated, which is affiliated with ACORN, \$800,000 dollars for a get-out-the-vote effort, which is not to be confused with voter registration. For more on ACORN and Obama's connections to the organization, which run a little deeper than the candidate lets on be sure to check out our website at www.factcheck.org.

HOST

Next, we take a look at an ad from the McCain campaign that makes claims about Obama's connection to 60's Weather Underground member Bill Ayers:

VIDEO: MCCAIN-PALIN CAMPAIGN AD “AMBITION”

ANNOUNCER

Obama's blind ambition. When convenient, he worked with terrorist Bill Ayers. When discovered, he lied.

HOST

We find the claim that Obama lied to be baseless. It's true Obama and Ayers served on the board of the Chicago Annenberg Challenge and The Woods Fund and that they met several times. But Obama hasn't hidden the fact that he knows Ayers or the capacity in which they worked together. And there's no evidence to suggest that the two are or ever were close friends or that Obama lied about the nature or extent of their relationship. But you wouldn't get that sense from watching that ad, or listening to this robo-call:

GRAPHIC: MCCAIN-PALIN ROBO-CALL

You “need to know that Barack Obama has worked closely with domestic terrorist, Bill Ayers, whose organization bombed the U.S. Capitol, the Pentagon, a judge's home, and killed Americans.”

Makes it sound as if Obama worked with Ayers to set bombs doesn't it? But Obama was never a member of Ayers's radical group. He was in elementary school at the time. And he has called the organization's acts “detestable” and “despicable.” And nobody died as a result of the bombs Ayers planted.

GRAPHIC: MCCAIN-PALIN ROBO-CALL

We move on to yet another robo-call from the McCain-Palin campaign about Sen. Obama and born-alive legislation:

ANNOUNCER

I'm calling on behalf of John McCain and the RNC because you need to know that Barack Obama and his Democrat allies in the Illinois Senate opposed a bill requiring doctors to care for babies born alive after surviving attempted abortions -- a position at odds even with John Kerry and Hillary Clinton.

BIDEN

The robo-caller's not telling you that the bill provided new protections only to infants who doctors felt could not survive outside the womb. Viable infants who survived a failed abortion, have been granted protections under Illinois state law since 1975. Obama opposed the new legislation because he felt it could potentially void Roe v. Wade-established rights.

As for Sens. Clinton and Kerry: they obviously had no say on the Illinois bill. But they supported federal legislation that passed the Senate by unanimous consent. Obama said he would have supported the bill, had he been in the Senate at the time. As to whether or not that's true, neither we, nor the robo-caller can be certain.

HOST

Next we take a look at this claim from the Obama-Biden campaign:

VIDEO: OBAMA-BIDEN AD "IT GETS WORSE"

ANNOUNCER

Now the Wall Street Journal reports John McCain would pay for the rest of his health care plan "with major reductions to Medicare and Medicaid." Eight hundred and eighty-two billion from Medicare alone. "Requiring cuts in benefits, eligibility, or both."

HOST

The claim that McCain would cut medicare benefits is false. The ad is referring to a Wall Street Journal report that quoted McCain economic advisor Douglas Holtz-Eakin as saying McCain would cut medicare and Medicaid spending through such measures as eliminating fraud. But he made clear that benefits would not be cut. Then we noticed this even more egregious ad from the Obama campaign:

VIDEO: OBAMA AD "GOLDEN YEARS"

ANNOUNCER

How would your golden years turn out under John McCain? His health care plan would cut Medicare by \$800 billion. That means a 22% cut in benefits. Higher premiums and co-pays. More expensive prescription drugs. Nursing home care could suffer and so could your choice of doctor.

Again, it's false. The numbers come from a liberal group that assumes McCain is going to have to make spending cuts of that magnitude to pay for his healthcare plan. But the McCain campaign has made it clear that they will find savings without cutting benefits. Further proof that it's political Halloween with plenty of scare tactics for all. So, keep the kiddies away from the TV and the telephone, lest they think that one candidate is preparing to have tea parties with terrorists and the other is preparing for a healthcare elimination bender.

And that's it for this episode of Just the Facts! For more home-stretch hair-raisers be sure to check out our website at www.factcheck.org. I'm Emi Kolawole, thanks for watching and see you next week.