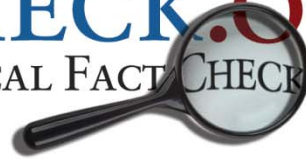




**FACTCHECK.ORG**  
ANNENBERG POLITICAL FACT CHECK



**JUST THE FACTS!**

**TITLE: "OF ONE DEBATE, TWO BIG TOPICS"**

**EPISODE #: 6**

**HOST**

Welcome back to Just the Facts, the weekly vid-cast from FactCheck.org. I'm Emi Kolawole, here with your weekly dose of fact vs. fiction.

**GRAPHIC: DEMS DEBATE**

This week we take a look at two very important topics in the lead-up to the Democratic nomination: NAFTA and health care. Both Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama were crying foul in this last debate, but let's take a look.

**GRAPHIC: NAFTA GRAPHIC**

NAFTA was the subject of a very nasty mailer back-and-forth between the two candidates. But first, we take a look at Senator Hillary Clinton:

**VIDEO: MSNBC DEBATE**

**SEN. HILLARY CLINTON**

I have been a critic of NAFTA from the very beginning. I didn't have a public position on it, because I was part of the administration, but when I started running for the Senate, I have been a critic. I've said it was flawed.

**HOST**

We find Clinton's past on NAFTA to be more ambivalent than concrete. She's accurate to say he was "a critic" of NAFTA during her years in the White House, at least according to her biographers. But she publicly supported the measure as First Lady. And she didn't criticize NAFTA until after she left the White House.

But Barack Obama went a step too far when he attempted to paint Clinton as a cheerleader for NAFTA, as recently as four years ago. Let's listen:

**VIDEO: MSNBC DEBATE**

**SEN. BARACK OBAMA**

I think that it is inaccurate for Senator Clinton to say that she's always opposed NAFTA. In her campaign for Senate, she said that NAFTA, on balance, had been good for New York and good for America.

**HOST**

She did say that, and many economists agree, too. But what Obama failed to mention is that she also said in the same breath that our past trade deals need a revamp: "I think we need a re-thinking of our trade policies."

Tougher terms. More enforcement. That's been her line for years. But the fact is, Clinton and Obama have very similar stands. They both say they will get out of NAFTA unless Mexico and Canada agree to renegotiate.

But, let's move on to health care. Both candidates claim their plan will cut costs more. Don't believe us? Check it out:

**VIDEO: MSNBC DEBATE****SEN. BARACK OBAMA**

We do more to reduce costs than any other plan that's been out there.

**SEN. HILLARY CLINTON**

I have the most aggressive measures to reduce costs and improve quality. And time and time again, people who have compared our two approaches have concluded that.

**SEN. BARACK OBAMA**

It is just not accurate to say that Senator Clinton does more to control costs than mine. That is not the case. There are many experts who have concluded that she does not.

**HOST**

What's true is that they both, clearly, can't be right. And we find that the evidence supports neither candidate. According to MIT Professor Jonathan Gruber, there's very little evidence to suggest that either would make a major dent in health care costs and certainly no evidence as to one person's plan being better than another's.

And that comes from an expert who likes both plans. Another expert, John Sheils, told us, I don't think anyone seriously expects that they would start generating those savings.

And Kenneth Thorpe of Emory University chimed in that both plans were virtually identical when it comes to overall cost-reduction.

So next time you hear the candidates claim their plan will “cut costs” more than the other, just ask yourself, “Who says?”

And that’s it for this week on Just the Facts!, this the last week of February. For more details on these and other stories, be sure to check out our website at [www.factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org). I’m Emi Kolawole. Thanks for watching, and see you next week.