Questions for *Frontline: Obama’s Deal*

Instructions: Answer and explain your answer to each question in complete sentences.

Describe the Obama administration’s strategy for holding the May 2009 health care reform meeting with the president and all interested parties. What was the administration trying to accomplish, and what was it trying to avoid, based on lessons learned in the past?

Karen Ignagni and the health insurance lobby wanted the final health care reform bill to require everyone to buy health insurance and not include a public option. What does Karen Ignagni’s role indicate about powerful lobbyists? Do you think these powerful lobbyists help or hurt the legislative process, and why?

In what ways were the demands of the health insurance lobby in opposition to the health care reforms candidate Obama proposed during the 2008 campaign? Why do you think President Obama eventually agreed to the demands from the lobbying groups? Do you see any other options the president might have explored? Do you think this type of political compromise is in the best interest of American citizens?

Do you think there is anything the Obama administration could have done to win Republican support for the bill? What were the consequences of the bill receiving almost no Republican votes?

Why were health care reform activists like Dr. Margaret Flowers angry with Sen. Baucus during the committee hearings? Do you feel their protests were justified? What could Sen. Baucus have done differently? What might have been the outcome?