

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 17, 2010

Contact: Bill Adair, Editor, PolitiFact.com (202) 236-5603  
Angie Drobnic Holan (727) 893-8573

## ‘Government takeover of health care’ named Lie of the Year by PolitiFact

WASHINGTON – PolitiFact.com, the Pulitzer Prize-winning fact-checking website of the St. Petersburg Times, has named “government takeover of health care” – a powerful and often-repeated phrase – as Lie of the Year for 2010.

The PolitiFact team explains in a story published today that the phrase “government takeover of health care” has played a significant role in shaping the public’s view of the plan, even though PolitiFact and other media organizations have debunked the phrase many times.

The PolitiFact editors and reporters chose the “government takeover” phrase from several finalists that included other claims rated “False” or “Pants on Fire” on the site’s the Truth-O-Meter™. It also was the top choice in a survey of PolitiFact readers.

The finalists included claims by Democratic Rep. Charles Rangel of New York that he had been exonerated by an ethics report and a claim by Rep. Michele Bachmann, R-Minn., that President Barack Obama’s trip to India was going to cost \$200 million a day.

The “government takeover” claim was chosen because it was so pervasive and had the most impact. By selecting it as Lie of the Year, PolitiFact is not making a judgment on whether the health care law is good policy. The phrase is simply not true.

“There were lots of falsehoods in the health care debate and the congressional campaign, but this one was repeated so often that it played a major role in shaping public opinion,” said Bill Adair, editor of PolitiFact and Washington Bureau Chief of the St. Petersburg Times.

### **About PolitiFact**

PolitiFact.com was launched in 2007 to fact-check the presidential campaign. In 2009, the site began fact-checking pundits and talk show hosts and a new feature, the Obameter, was added to track President Obama’s 500-plus campaign promises. It has received numerous awards, including the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting.

The site is a product of the St. Petersburg Times, Florida’s largest newspaper with an average circulation of 377,235 Sunday and 239,684 daily (ABC publisher’s statement 9/26/10). Considered one of the top ten newspapers in the country, the newspaper has eight Pulitzer Prizes to its name, including two 2009 Pulitzer Prizes.