

**September 24th, 2007**

## **Steelworker Skvara on 'Oprah' Thursday, September 27, 2007**

By Andrea Holecek / [Northwest Times](#)

MUNSTER, IN -- Retired steelworker Stephen Skvara says it's his message rather than his mug that's prompted invitations to Springfield, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C., for television talk shows, parades, health care rallies and as a guest on "The Oprah Winfrey Show."

His appearance on the show was taped Sept. 4 in Chicago and will air at 9 a.m and 11:05 p.m. Thursday on ABC.

"Every day is something new," said Skvara, a former LTV mill mechanic from Union Township who was crippled in an auto accident in 1997 and now walks with two canes. "It's kind of interesting for a retired guy. All of a sudden something happens and people want to hear you to talk."

Skvara, who retired on a disability from LTV after 34 years, became a spokesman on the issue of national health care during the nationally televised AFL-CIO presidential debate at Soldier Field in Chicago last month.

A crowd estimated to be between 12,000 and 15,000 gave Skvara a standing ovation after he told the Democratic presidential hopefuls that he hasn't been able to afford to pay for his wife's health insurance since LTV went bankrupt, which caused a two-thirds cut in his pension and the loss of his family's health care benefit.

"What is wrong with America, and what will you do to change it?" Skvara asked the presidential candidates.

A [video clip](#) of the moment was broadcast on TV news programs and apparently "made me a poster child for national health care," he said Thursday.

Thursday's "Oprah Winfrey Show" will tackle the subject of national health care and will feature Michael Moore, the American author and Academy Award-winning director and producer of "Fahrenheit 9/11" and "Bowling for Columbine," two of the highest-grossing documentaries ever. Moore's most recent movie, "Sicko," was screened by the audience before the show, Skvara said.

"I'm on during an introduction piece," he said. "Oprah and Moore sit down and she turns and says, 'A few months ago, "Sicko" came out and stirred up a lot of controversy. Then this man stood up at the presidential debate,' and they played the tape of it, introduced me and ask me to give an update on my situation."

Moore thanked Skvara for what he said at the debate.

"He said I changed the issue of the primary and put the issue of health care back on the table," Skvara said. "I feel good in the respect that there could be change and everyone is reexamining their priorities. Our health care delivery system stinks. Health care needs to be about health care, not about how to make money on the system."