

A large crowd went to what is expected to be just four of many public meetings during August with Colorado's congressional representatives so they can discuss health care reform with the public.

Rep. Mike Coffman (R-Colo.) held two public meetings Wednesday night at the Arapahoe County Administration Building in Littleton.

Initially it was supposed to be just one meeting, but the second meeting was added for overflow. Then Coffman added a third and fourth meeting because of the size of the crowd.

A member of the Colorado Hospital Association spoke first, followed by Coffman. Then, people from both sides who signed in were allowed to alternate, each speaking for two minutes.

In each meeting, the room got crowded and somewhat heated, but it never boiled over into shouting like some other meetings that have been held across the country.

Things got more intense outside of the building, where some protestors confronted and shouted at each other.

Inside, those on both sides of the health care debate generally showed respect for the other.

"I don't want to get my health insurance from any company whose bottom line is to make a profit from the human illness and suffering and injury and misery I find that abhorrent and repugnant," Scott Blackard, a man from Centennial who supports the health care reform.

Tony Roberts, a Parker man who is receiving veteran's health care, has the opposite stance.

"This is a public-run by a federal government program. That is not what I want for my children or anyone else," Roberts said.

Coffman and the crowd were able to listen with respect as the debate went back and forth.

"Most people's health care is being rationed, but by their insurance company," said Todd Mata of Centennial, who also supports the reform.

"I think the crowd here, everyone here, and everyone out there, should be entitled to the same health care that our Congress members get and our senators get," Barbara Coombs of Littleton said.

"This problem is extraordinarily complex and I think it needs to be taken one bite at a time.

That's how you eat an elephant and what we're doing is not eating the elephant the right way," Rick Schick of Centennial said.

Coffman himself has called the current reform proposals misguided and warned that it could cost jobs.

"We are talking about an expansion of health care and we have to question how well that's run," Coffman told the crowd.

Another town hall has been added for Monday, Aug. 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Douglas County Commission's hearing room. Coffman will also be holding town hall meetings in Douglas and Elbert counties, according to his Web site which says details will be forthcoming.

The Arapahoe County Sheriff's office had two deputies on the scene Wednesday night, but Arapahoe County Sheriff Grayson Robinson told 9NEWS earlier in the day he was not concerned about the crowds.

Robinson says there was a nearby concert planned in Littleton and says his deputies will keep an eye on the people attending both the town hall meetings and the concert.

Scores of demonstrators on both sides of the health care reform debate attended Congressman Ed Perlmutter's (D-Colo.) town hall meeting outside a King Soopers in Brighton Saturday.

Perlmutter has one additional public event planned for the August break, a housing fair with Congressman Jared Polis (D-Colo.) at 8:30 a.m. on Aug. 22 at the Margaret Carpenter Recreation Center in Thornton.

Polis has the most extensive public schedule of any currently published. Hundreds of people attended what was planned as a small group discussion at a coffee shop in Boulder Friday morning for Polis.

Polis has nine additional public meetings on his schedule. Details are posted on his Web site at <http://polis.house.gov/Calendar/>.

A spokesman for Rep. Betsy Markey (D-Colo.) said no details on public events are currently available but an announcement will be made next week. Spokesman Ben Marter said Markey will hold public, small-group meetings and at least one roundtable discussion on the topic of agriculture.

A spokesperson for Rep. Diana DeGette (D-Colo.) says the congresswoman's schedule is still being developed.

Sen. Mark Udall (D-Colo.) will hold a congressional subcommittee meeting on National Parks in Estes Park on Aug. 24. The meeting is open to the public. Udall will also host a town hall meeting on energy in Durango on August 27. A Udall spokeswoman says to expect a future announcement regarding additional public meetings.

A representative of Sen. Michael Bennet (D-Colo.) says information on public events will be released at a later date. Bennet's spokesman says the senator will hold public events during the August recess and will begin a 30-county tour of Colorado with events announced in advance.

Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-Colo.) is expected to hold public events in Woodland Park and Chaffee County.

By Shawn Patrick As reported on [9News](#)