



PRESS RELEASE

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PA Chamber: commonsense health-care reform needed, not government takeover

HARRISBURG, PA – The **Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry** applauded state House lawmakers for reinforcing the message that a massive government takeover of health care is not the solution for reducing health-care costs and ensuring the availability of quality, affordable health care.

Several lawmakers held a rally at the State Capitol today in support of the proposed Health Care Freedom Act, which would preserve individual rights to not take part in a government-run health care plan, should one be implemented, and work to preserve the patient-doctor relationship.

The PA Chamber opposes the creation of a costly public option, which has been the centerpiece of the health-care reform debate in Congress. Although a public option is not included in the reform measure that was recently passed by the U.S. Senate, it was part of the House version and still has support among federal lawmakers.

“Collectively, business provides health-care coverage to more than 170 million Americans,” said Gene Barr, PA Chamber vice president of government and public affairs. “The employer community and individuals have much at stake in the reform debate, as rising costs threaten business growth and job security. Rather than create a massive government program that threatens private sector coverage, lawmakers must focus on practical, responsible improvements that effectively address cost and access concerns.”

The business community supports health-care reforms that:

- bend the cost curve for the overall health-care system;
- improve the long-term fiscal outlook for federal and state governments;
- produce greater quality and value in the health-care system; and
- help facilitate long-term economic recovery.

Barr said today’s health-care rally is a reminder to Congress that while the people support health-care reform, they are not comfortable with the direction in which some lawmakers are taking the debate.

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“The federal bills contain little if any cost-containment measures,” he stressed. “In addition, both employers and employees would face higher taxes at a time when neither can afford additional tax burdens.

“It’s time for lawmakers to take a fresh look at innovative ideas that will ensure that health-care reform achieves its intended goals.”

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The Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry is the state’s largest broad-based business advocacy organization, with its membership comprising businesses of all sizes and across all industry sectors. The PA Chamber is The Statewide Voice of Business.