

United States Senator Ron Wyden



June 25, 2008

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Press Releases

Press Release of Senator Wyden

CBO and Joint Tax Find Healthy Americans Act Would Lead to Surpluses after 2014

Thursday, May 1, 2008

WASHINGTON, DC – After analyzing the bipartisan Healthy Americans Act (S. 334), the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the Joint Committee on Taxation (Joint Tax) today released a report that found the Act would be roughly budget neutral in 2014 and found that implementation of the Act would actually create surpluses after that year. The findings were released by CBO Director, Peter Orszag, in a closed-door briefing with a bipartisan group of cosponsors. Copies of the CBO/Joint Tax Report are available on the CBO Web site at www.cbo.gov.

"Today, the government's "go-to" offices for federal budget and tax analysis have thrown decades of conventional wisdom in the trashcan," said Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.). "They've proven we can get everyone in American health care coverage without breaking the bank."

"The CBO report is confirmation that our bill would not only cut down the costs of health care, but in the long run actually save money," said Sen. Bob Bennett (R-Utah). "I am convinced we can reach our goal to improve coverage and provide affordable, private health insurance to every American."

Wyden and Bennett have won twelve U.S. Senate co-sponsors for the first bipartisan, health reform bill to cover all Americans. In addition to guaranteeing that every American can afford quality, private health insurance, Wyden-Bennett would: give Americans choice in where they get their health care; break the link between employment and insurance to make health care portable from job to job (and continue if you lose your job); promote personal responsibility and preventative medicine and reform the insurance market so that insurers are forced to compete on price, benefits and quality.

Senate co-sponsors of the Healthy Americans Act include: U.S. Senators Lamar Alexander (R-Tenn.), Bill Nelson (D-Fla.), Judd Gregg (R-N.H.), Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), Mary Landrieu (D-La.), Norm Coleman (R-Minn.), Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.), Mike Crapo (R-Idaho), Tom Carper (D-Del.), Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii), and Bob Corker (R-Tenn).

"This is an ambitious approach to fixing many of the problems plaguing our health care system," said U.S. Sen. Bill Nelson (D-Fla.)

"The cost of our health care system continues to grow too quickly and has



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become unaffordable to millions of Americans. The Healthy Americans Act is a bipartisan effort that begins the discussion of reforming our health care system to make health care more affordable to everyone." said Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.). "In a country that spends trillions on health care, we need to implement a system under which everyone can have access to care, and the Healthy Americans Act provides a good starting point as we continue to work towards expanding quality and affordable private health care insurance coverage to all our citizens. I will continue to work with my colleagues in both parties to strengthen this important health care reform legislation."

"Health care should be a right, not a privilege in this country, and the Healthy Americans Act represents a truly bipartisan solution to the health care crisis threatening our nation," said Sen. Debbie Stabenow (D-Mich.). "Today's report from The CBO takes us one step further in addressing the practicality and necessity of providing a health care system that works for all Americans."

"A bipartisan approach is the only hope we have of passing meaningful health care reform legislation in the near future," U.S. Senator Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) said. "Today's announcement from CBO indicates we can develop a fiscally responsible health care proposal that provides all Americans with access to affordable, quality health insurance and is deeply rooted in the private market. I look forward to working closely with the bill sponsors and am hopeful we can get to the point that I can support this legislation if it comes before the full Senate."

"Today's news should garner even more bipartisan support for the Healthy Americans Act. This proposal not only provides universal coverage, but does so in a fiscally responsible way," said Sen. Joe Lieberman (ID-Conn.) "Americans are calling for leadership on health care issues and the bipartisan cosponsors of this bill are working to bring true reform to our health care system."

"We are on the verge of reforming our nation's health care system, and I am pleased to be a co-sponsor of the Healthy American Act -- the most widely supported, bipartisan healthcare bill before the Senate today," said Sen. Tom Carper (D-Del.). "This legislation provides all Americans access to affordable, quality health care and allows patients to take a more active role in their own healthcare. Prevention and wellness incentives are key to creating a healthy America and driving down health care costs."

"Every American deserves access to affordable, quality health care," Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La.) said. "We need to devise an economically feasible solution to the country's health care crisis. It is incumbent upon Congress to assert some control over the escalating costs of health care and the skyrocketing number of uninsured Americans. I am proud to sponsor this bipartisan legislation, which promises every American access to affordable health insurance by matching private insurers with health care consumers. Using the private sector to grant more people access to health care makes good economic sense — and by keeping our workforce healthy, it will also save taxpayers from expensive emergency room bills."

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