



For Immediate Release

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Alliance to Fight for Health Care Statement on Senate COBRA Bill

Washington, DC— The **Alliance to Fight for Health Care** – a broad stakeholder group dedicated to protecting employer-provided health coverage – applauded the introduction of the “Worker Health Coverage Protection Act” by Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Mark Warner (D-VA), which provides funding to help those who have lost their jobs remain on their job-based health insurance.

“We applaud Senators Durbin, Cortez Masto, Brown, and Warner, for fighting to provide COBRA funding so the millions of Americans who have lost their jobs know they can keep their health insurance when they most need it,” said James A. Klein, president of the **American Benefits Council**. “There is bipartisan support in the House and Senate to help keep health care affordable through COBRA, and Congress needs to act now.”

This bill is the companion legislation to the 100% COBRA funding provision that was included in the HEROES Act and passed by the House. There is bipartisan, bicameral support for providing COBRA funding with a Republican bill in the Senate, S. 4329, the Continuous Health Coverage for Workers Act, introduced by Senators Martha McSally (R-AZ), John Cornyn (R-TX), Steve Daines (R-MT), and Dan Sullivan (R-AK), and H.R. 6810, the Health Care Protection Act, a bipartisan bill introduced by Representatives Rodney Davis (R-IL), Kurt Schrader (D-OR), Ann Wagner (R-MO), Kendra Horn (D-OK), Anthony Gonzalez (R-OH), and Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM).

“We appreciate their efforts to seek passage of legislation to help people maintain access to the health coverage they have, the doctors they know and trust, and not have to start over their deductibles in the middle of the year at a time when they can least afford it,” Klein added.

“As Americans continue to face job loss and economic challenges as a result of COVID-19, we strongly support efforts to ensure that Americans have access to affordable health care coverage during the COVID-19 crisis and, importantly, that our faith communities are able to retain access to their employer-provided health care,” said The Rev. Jeff Thiemann, Vice Chair of the **Church Alliance**. “We hope that any legislation that moves forward will include continuation coverage for church workers as we remain firmly committed to making sure all Americans have access to affordable health care coverage because we know that access to care is essential when it comes to preserving and protecting lives.”

“The last thing working people need during a pandemic is uncertainty about their health care,” said Kyle Makarios with the **United Brotherhood of Carpenters**. “Workers who are laid off shouldn’t lose their health care coverage. Thank you to Senators Durbin, Cortez Masto, Brown,

and Warner for recognizing the importance of affordable health care for our unemployed members.”

“We are in a healthcare crisis, yet millions are losing the one thing they need most right now: their health insurance,” said D. Taylor, International President of **UNITE HERE**. “That is why I am pleased that Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) have introduced the ‘Worker Health Coverage Protection Act’ that will provide 100% emergency coverage of health care premiums until workers are able to return to work and assume their coverage once again. It is a desperate situation out here. No job, no healthcare, no savings. If Congress cannot agree on a large and vitally-needed legislative package to bring relief to Americans, then please pass the Worker Health Coverage Protection Act to give workers at least one bit of comfort knowing their health insurance is intact.”

“Employer-provided coverage has been the backbone of our healthcare system for decades,” said the **Council of Insurance Agents and Brokers**. “Before Covid-19, more than half of all Americans and their families secured coverage through the employer-sponsored system. The Council supports the subsidization of COBRA premiums, which has the power to deliver immediate relief to millions of Americans. We applaud the work legislators are doing to generate solutions that allow individuals to maintain access to their doctors and affordable health insurance.”

We look forward to working with Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy and the Administration to restart their negotiations to ensure the 4th COVID-19 relief bill will have a robust and meaningful COBRA subsidy to ensure people can actually afford to keep their coverage and that it will cover everyone that has lost their job or been furloughed since the beginning of the pandemic. In addition, we urge them to include similar support for continuation of coverage for church plans.

*The **Alliance to Fight for Health Care** is a broad-based coalition comprised of businesses, patient advocates, employer organizations, unions, health care companies, consumer groups and other stakeholders that support employer-provided health coverage. The Alliance is committed to ensuring that employer-provided coverage remains an effective and affordable option for working Americans and their families, especially during times of global health and economic crisis. The coalition (previously working as the **Alliance to Fight the 40**), led the successful effort to repeal the so-called 40% “Cadillac Tax” on health care coverage.*

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