



COMMUNICATING for AMERICA

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CA MEMBERS SUPPORT CO-OP HEALTH PLAN AND TAX EQUITY FOR AMERICANS PAYING FOR THEIR OWN HEALTH INSURANCE

FERGUS FALLS, MN – In a recent survey of Communicating for America (CA) members, the majority of those supporting some form of a public or non-profit health care option favor member-owned, non-profit co-ops that compete with the private market on a level playing field. Of those responding, 39 percent said there should be no government health plan.

The survey also found that more than 62 percent of the respondents were opposed to a mandate requiring all employers to offer health insurance to their employees. Many of the respondents expressed concerns that such a mandate would hurt small businesses.

“Small employers should not be required to provide health insurance. Employees however should be able to buy health insurance at the same price as those from large companies and all health insurance should be portable from one company to another and from one state to another,” one respondent stated.

Another added, “As a small business we would be forced to cut our work force if required to carry insurance on all employees. We would like to be able to offer affordable coverage for our full time employees, but this is not even possible for some of them.”

The survey also showed that CA members overwhelmingly (more than 88 percent) believe that Americans paying for their own health insurance should receive the same tax benefits as those who receive employer-sponsored health insurance.

“Based on our meetings in Washington, DC, the results of our survey, in many ways, mirror the bipartisan discussions taking place in the Senate Finance Committee between moderates from both parties,” said Wayne Nelson, president of CA. “Our members support a co-op plan that offers an affordable option for self-employed individuals and small businesses, but feel that plan should

compete with private insurers to ensure that Americans have a choice in what plan is best for their family. Also, our members oppose an employer mandate and support a more equitable tax system for those Americans paying for their own health insurance.”

“CA has been a strong advocate for individuals and families without access to health care for more than three decades,” Nelson continued. “In a recent white paper we suggested components of health care reform should include requiring Americans to have health insurance that provides a minimum set of benefits, 100 percent tax deductions for all Americans paying their own health insurance premiums, better access to health-related information, and affordable and accessible insurance through a the combination of a strong private health insurance market and a new co-op health plan.”

When given the opportunity to give additional comments on any topics not covered in the survey, a large percentage of members voiced support for guaranteed-issue without regard to pre-existing medical conditions. “I am 60 years old, and was just laid off my job. I cannot get any health insurance because I am diabetic. I am so hurt and scared, please do not discriminate against sick people,” said one member. “Force insurance companies to accept all pre-existing conditions at a competitive rate,” another member added.

Communicating for America is a 37-year-old non-partisan and non-profit national association made up of farmers and small businesses all across rural America. For more information on CA, visit their web site at www.communicatingforamerica.org.

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