



For Immediate Release
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Health Care Reform: Rep. Ross Statement on Promoting Consumer Choice, Competition in the Marketplace

Washington, DC - Today, Representative Mike Ross (D-AR), Chairman of the Blue Dog Health Care Task Force, issued the following statement as lawmakers in both the House and Senate continue to push forward with negotiations on health care reform legislation.

“As Blue Dogs, we agree that injecting stiff competition in the marketplace is critical to the success of health care reform and should be a top goal of lawmakers as legislation makes its way through both the House and Senate.

“A proven effective method of increasing competition and choice in the marketplace is to require that private industry adopt reforms in order to meet specific availability and cost targets. Failure to meet these goals would then trigger a public option that would compete on a level playing field, filling the void in the absence of adequate competition.

“The Blue Dogs share the President’s goal of reforming the health care system to bring down costs and provide more choices, and we are encouraged by the Administration’s willingness to remain open to a number of different options for accomplishing these goals. We also agree that increasing competition and choice in the marketplace is non-negotiable, and we look forward to working with our colleagues in both the House and Senate to write a bill that can pass both chambers.”

The fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition was formed in 1995 with the goal of representing the center of the House of Representatives and appealing to the mainstream values of the American public. The Blue Dogs are dedicated to a core set of beliefs that transcend partisan politics, including a deep commitment to the financial stability and national security of the United States. Currently there are 52 members of the Blue Dog Coalition. For more information, visit the Blue Dog Website at <http://www.house.gov/melancon/BlueDogs/>.

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