

For Immediate Release

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STATEMENT BY AFL-CIO PRESIDENT JOHN SWEENEY ON HOUSE  
HEALTH CARE REFORM BILL

July 14, 2009

Working Americans saw real and historic action today in the efforts to fix our broken health care system with the release of the House of Representatives bill, “America’s Affordable Health Choices Act.” We applaud the House Ways and Means, Energy and Commerce, and Education and Labor Committees for their hard work and solid work product. We especially recognize the contributions of Chairmen Rangel, Waxman and Miller in coordinating Herculean efforts to produce a single bill for committee consideration so that reform efforts can move forward smoothly and expeditiously.

The House proposal meets President Obama’s goals by controlling runaway health care costs, offering the American people real choices and expanding access to quality health care. It has a high quality public health insurance plan that provides real choices and real competition for private insurance from day one. It calls on corporations to pay their fair share. Like the President’s proposal, it calls on those who can afford it to contribute to funding health coverage expansion – in the House bill through a modest tax surcharge. It does not ask the American people to pay more for what they already have. In fact, this legislation offers the real promise of improving quality, increasing access and reducing costs, all at the same time.

Voters want their elected representatives to guarantee quality affordable health care. They want a quality public plan that will provide a real alternative to confusing private plans that profit from denying care and shortchanging coverage. They want everyone to pay their fair share. We urge the Representatives to move forward with reform and vigorously resist any attempt to dilute this bill during the legislative process. We call on Congress to act swiftly on health care reform and deliver much needed relief to working families.

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