



**For Immediate Release  
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**Blue Dogs: “We are committed to passing health care reform that lowers costs and improves quality for all Americans”**

Washington, DC - Today, seven members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition delivered identical opening statements at a House Energy and Commerce Committee mark up of health care reform legislation. Following is the text of the statement.

“I am committed to passing health care reform that lowers costs and improves quality for all Americans.

“I sit here today ready to work with Chairman Waxman, Ranking Member Barton and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

“Our goal is the same.

“The skyrocketing cost of health care is not only bankrupting American families and businesses – it is leading this country down a path to fiscal disaster.

“Our current system is riddled with inefficiencies and waste. Misaligned incentives increase costs and fail to reward high quality care.

“However, we cannot fix these problems by simply pouring more money into a broken system.

“Here is what we must do:

- Find every penny of savings within our current public programs and ensure we get more value for every health care dollar we spend;
- Be more aggressive in implementing innovative delivery reforms to bend the cost curve; and,
- Provide assistance for individuals, families and small businesses to help them purchase health care without bankrupting the federal government.

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“Over the past several months, Blue Dogs have put forth substantive policies in order to achieve common-sense and bipartisan health care reform. We look forward to working through the markup to incorporate them.

“We have an historic opportunity to transform our health care system into one that meets the needs of all Americans. We cannot pass up this moment without fundamentally changing the incentives in our system to reward high quality, efficient health care.”

Blue Dog members offering the statement include Rep. John Barrow (D-GA), Rep. Bart Gordon (D-TN), Rep. Baron Hill (D-IN), Rep. Jim Matheson (D-UT), Rep. Charlie Melancon, Rep. Mike Ross (D-AR) and Rep. Zack Space (D-OH).

*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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