

Hon. Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress



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HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM

Strengthening Coverage for Low-Income Families

The federal Medicaid program is a public insurance program that is a partnership between states and the federal government. Called Medi-Cal in California, this program is one of the largest insurance providers to low-income families and children. *It comprises a major part of the coverage picture in Sacramento as well, insuring some 12 percent of residents in Sacramento County.* The recent state budget crisis, however, has undermined Medi-Cal's ability to provide quality care to beneficiaries with reasonable reimbursement rates for providers.

Health insurance reform will take significant steps to restore the promise of Medi-Cal in Sacramento as a critical part of the social safety net:

- **EXPANDS ELIGIBILITY FOR MEDICAID:** Health insurance reform will open the door to health coverage for the first time to millions of low-income adults across California. Nationwide, adults with incomes at or below 133 percent of the federal poverty level will be eligible for Medicaid. *63,000 people in Sacramento County at this income level are uninsured; the majority of these people would become eligible for health insurance through Medi-Cal thanks to health insurance reform.*
- **INCREASES MEDICAID PAYMENTS FOR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDERS:** Medi-Cal payment rates are often below what it costs for doctors, nurses, and other primary care providers to service this population. Health insurance reform will help to address this problem by increasing the rates that primary care doctors receive to treat Medi-Cal patients in 2013 and 2014. The cost of this expansion will be borne entirely by the federal government, so California's budget will not be strained any further by it.
- **INVESTS IN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS:** The many community health centers throughout Sacramento are a key part of the region's health-care infrastructure. Sacramento's health center community has been expanding and growing, adding Federally Qualified Health Centers to its roster and buttressing the ability of these community providers to treat additional patients. Health insurance reform will provide \$11 billion for health centers throughout the country; *as much as \$18.2 million in federal funding could flow to Sacramento's health centers as a result.*
- **PROVIDES CREDITS TO MAKE COVERAGE AFFORDABLE:** One of the most pressing problems in our health-care system today is that it is simply unaffordable for millions of people with limited incomes. In order to make it possible for more families to have coverage, health insurance reform will provide families with incomes up to \$88,000 for a family of four with tax credits to help them afford insurance. *In Sacramento, more than 180,000 households will qualify for a tax credit to help purchase health coverage or else become eligible for Medi-Cal coverage.*