



Holt meets with medical staff at a Central New Jersey hospital.

“We can’t fix our economy if we don’t fix the health care system. As it is now, our health care system adds needless costs, inequality, and inefficiency that hobble our economy. I support comprehensive efforts to improve the quality of care, focus on prevention, and bring spending under control.” – Rush Holt

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### **Protecting Medicare and Medicaid**

Rep. Holt believes that essential health care programs like Medicare and Medicaid should be protected. He has worked to ensure that these programs which provide health care coverage to American seniors and the most vulnerable in our society will be there for future generations.

Rep. Holt successfully fought for changes that strengthen Medicare. As a result of the health reform law, Medicare will remain financially solvent for 12 additional years. Further, health reform will close the Medicare prescription drug "donut hole" and will provide all Medicare beneficiaries with free preventive screenings, including cancer screenings.

Rep. Holt has fought the Republican majority plan to dismantle Medicare, which would provide Americans 55 years of age a voucher to buy insurance on the private insurance market during retirement. As a result of this extreme measure, out-of-pocket health care costs likely would double for seniors, and the insurance company would be put in charge. Furthermore, the Republican plan would repeal assistance for prescription medicine and for primary care and preventive medicine provided in health reform.

Additionally, Rep. Holt has fought the Republican majority's plan to gut Medicaid, which provides benefits for our seniors living in nursing homes, for families struggling with children who have disabilities, and for the poorest in our society. The Republican plan would switch Medicaid to a block grant to the states—eliminating minimum standards, providing an inequitable patchwork of services, and increasing costs for Medicaid beneficiaries.

### **Supporting Health Care Reform**

Rep. Holt supported the health reform package that is now law. In supporting reform, Rep. Holt said, "I stand with the families, seniors, and small businesses whom I represent and who will have greater control over their health care." As a result of the health reform law, children with pre-existing conditions may no longer be denied coverage; young people up to age 26 can stay on their parents' plans; pregnant women and cancer patients are protected from insurance abuses; seniors pay less for their drugs; and small businesses have received tax cuts to help them provide health insurance to their employees. Seniors have found that Medicare not only remains intact but is improved: seniors are receiving free preventive care and better primary care.

### **Expanding Access to Mental Health Care**

Rep. Holt has fought to ensure that Americans have access to mental health care services. In 2008, Rep. Holt fought and successfully won passage of mental health parity legislation that

ended the insurance discrimination that had existed for decades against people with mental illness. In January 2010, this legislation, the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, entered effect, requiring insurance companies to cover mental health and substance abuse treatments on similar terms to physical health treatments.

Rep. Holt worked to ensure that mental health provisions were included in health reform, including ensuring that Americans have free access to mental health preventive services, including adult and adolescent depression screening and alcohol abuse screening. Additionally, health reform created grants for mental and behavioral health education programs to allow these programs to train more future providers.

### Investing in Medical Research



Rep. Holt attended the White House ceremony at which President Obama signed an executive order lifting

White House photo by Chuck Kennedy

As a scientist, Rep. Holt understands both the lifesaving value of medical research and the need to keep politics out of the scientific process. He has worked in Congress to support stem cell research, and he joined President Obama for the signing of an executive order lifting the ban on federal funding for embryonic stem cell research. He also has worked consistently to increase funding for critical research at the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control, and the National Science Foundation. These investments in scientific and health research will create jobs and improve options for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of life-threatening diseases such as breast cancer, Parkinson's Disease, and diabetes.

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Rep. Holt is a co-chair of the Congressional Biomedical Research Caucus — a forum where Members and staff can interact directly with preeminent researchers. The Caucus brought in experts on issues ranging from cancer to epigenetics including local experts such as Princeton University professor Dr. Bonnie Bassler.

### **Protecting Early Retiree Health Care**

Rep. Holt introduced the Retiree Health Coverage Protection Act, which aims to restore full funding for the Early Retiree Health Insurance Program, a program that provides financial assistance to employers to help them maintain coverage for early retirees age 55 and older who are not yet eligible for Medicare. The program has assisted more than 190 employers, unions, and state and local governments in New Jersey in providing health insurance for their early retirees aged 55-64. Further, Rep. Holt is a cosponsor of the Earned Retiree Health Benefits Protection Act, which would prohibit group health plans from reducing retiree health benefits and would require group health plans to restore health benefits that have been taken away.

### **Helping Seniors Age in Place**

Rep. Holt has passionately fought for seniors to receive supportive services in a facility or in their home, whichever is desired and appropriate. During the reauthorization of the Older American Act, Rep. Holt helped create the Community Innovations for Aging in Place program. The program supports local community driven projects to meet the needs of seniors in the local community. In Fiscal Year 2010, Rep. Holt was successful in securing \$5 million for the program, and he helped obtain funds for local programs in Central New Jersey. To protect this program's funding, Rep. Holt has led a Congressional letter to the House Appropriations Committee urging support.

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