

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WISPIRG Statement on House Passage of Health Reform

The passage of health reform last night is a huge step forward for Wisconsin. It could not have happened if Wisconsin Representatives like Ron Kind and Steve Kagen had not put Wisconsin interests ahead of powerful Washington lobbies like the health insurance industry.

Now that the political wrangling in Washington is over, Wisconsinites will soon experience for themselves the bill's immediate benefits. No Wisconsin child will again be denied coverage due to a pre-existing condition. Small businesses will receive tax credits for covering their employees this year. Parents will have the right to keep their children on their plans till age 26.

In the years to come, as this new law is fully implemented, the legislation will begin to lower costs by delivering better, smarter care and increasing competition in the insurance markets. The result will be \$1.4 trillion smaller deficit over the next two decades. Businesses' health costs per employees will be \$3000 less than under current law, according to the Business Roundtable. Consumers purchasing their own insurance will find 14-20% lower premiums for the same coverage than without this legislation, according to the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office. And at long last, insurers will be prohibited from using pre-existing conditions, errors on forms, and lifetime or yearly caps to drop your coverage or price it out of reach.

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