



NEWS RELEASE

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Representative Dave Clark's Health System Reform bill, HB133, passed out of the House today unanimously (with three absent). Rep. Clark introduced an amendment requiring the task force established by HB 133 to study the full impact of the provision (lines 105-108) that, with federal approval, would move children from CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) onto private plans subsidized by the Utah Premium Partnership. The amendment passed with strong bi-partisan support. This shows that legislators on both sides of the aisle are committed to ensuring the best interest of Utah's children.

The Utah Health Policy Project strongly supports this bill as amended and applauds Representative Clark's efforts to bring consensus around the enormous, difficult task of reforming Utah's health system.

"We are delighted to support this bill and appreciate Rep. Clark's willingness to consider and bring forth amendments related to the bill's impact on the low-income medically underserved," says Elizabeth Garbe.

Setting the Table for Reform in the Current Legislative Session

In the Governor's and leadership's joint press conference earlier in the day, Rep. Clark spoke to his commitment to optimize current programs (Medicaid, CHIP, Utah Premium Partnership) to cover up to 1/2 of the state's uninsured. UHPP would like to draw attention to 3 initiatives in play *in the current legislative session* that would go a long way to targeting these low-income families: Speaker Curtis HB326 CHIP Open Enrollment; HB364 Promotion of Health Care Coverage (Rep. Holdaway); and HB131 Community-Based Self Sufficiency Mini-Grants (Rep. Seelig). If we are serious about going after the 'low-hanging fruit, we will support and fund these and other bills that will help families get the health care they need," says Lincoln Nehring, Medicaid/CHIP Policy Director.

Moving Forward

“As we move toward the planning process, we look forward to bringing our expertise on affordability and quality issues to bear on the solution seeking process,” says Judi Hilman, Executive Director of UHPP. The bill outlines 16 ‘action items’ to be considered through an intensive 3-year reform process. “We are pleased to see that most of the hot-button issues pertaining to Utah’s broken health care system are included in the bill’s framework,” adds Hilman. These issues include: risk management, the role of Medicaid and CHIP in ensuring affordability, whether a mandate is needed, what to include in the benefit package, among others. For recommendations on how to address these issues and ‘set the table for reform, see UHPP’s recent “Setting the Table” [paper](#).

“Every Utahn has a stake in this process, particularly families of modest means. For this reason we are fully committed to bringing the consumer voice into the discussion...every step along the way” added Garbe. “This will be critical if we want the reforms to results in quality, comprehensive, affordable health care coverage for all Utahns.”

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UHPP can arrange interviews with uninsured/underinsured individuals, Medicaid consumers or small business owners struggling to provide health insurance as a benefit to their employees.

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