



For Immediate Release
March 21, 2010

Contact: Brent Connett
Phone: (512) 474-1798

State Legislators Announce Plans to Formally Reject ObamaCare

AUSTIN, TEXAS - Following the passage of H.R. 3590, "The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act", by the U.S. House of Representatives, members of the Texas Conservative Coalition (TCC) announced plans to file legislation to reject the overreaching bill due to its impact and costs to the state and to Texans.

State Representative Wayne Christian (R-Center), President of the Texas Conservative Coalition, announced his plan to file legislation to prohibit the implementation of the overarching federal healthcare overhaul in Texas: "When the Legislature convenes in January of 2011, the members of the Texas Conservative Coalition will stand together to reject the federal takeover of health care."

On Wednesday, March 17, Idaho became the first state to formally reject ObamaCare as Governor Butch Otter signed a law that requires the state attorney general to file suit against the federal government. The Associated Press reports that similar legislation is pending in thirty-seven other states.

Rep. Christian stated: "The first bill I file in advance of the 82nd session will be to ensure that Texans retain the freedom of choice when it comes to their health care, even if their choice is to remain uncovered. We recognize that our efforts to reject ObamaCare may end up in federal courts, and may ultimately be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. So be it. It is time states reassert their constitutional rights and Texas should be on the forefront of the movement."

The Massachusetts health care reform enacted in 2006, known as "RomneyCare," has many similarities to the federal health care overhaul legislation, yet it has failed to contain health insurance costs. According to Grace-Marie Turner, president of the Galen Institute, "A typical family of four [in Massachusetts] today faces total annual health costs of nearly \$13,788, the highest in the country. Per capita spending is 27% higher than the national average." Despite the health insurance mandate that Massachusetts residents be covered, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) reports that the state *still* has more than 200,000 uninsured residents.

State Representative Linda Harper-Brown (R-Irving), TCC Vice-President, stated: "The federal government has again overstepped its constitutional bounds by passing massively expensive health care reform legislation which takes the unprecedented step of mandating that all Americans purchase health insurance."

According to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO), the federal health care overhaul legislation will cost \$940 billion over the next decade. It is estimated that the Medicaid expansions in ObamaCare will force Texas to increase spending on Medicaid, although previous expansions of Medicaid have not reduced the uninsured rate. In 1988 the uninsured rate in Texas was 24.5 percent; in 2008, it was 24.1 percent

even though spending on health and human services increased from \$4.1 billion to \$29.7 billion in the same period.

State Representative Ken Paxton (R-McKinney), TCC Secretary and Treasurer, noted: "This new spending is untenable, and will be ineffective at lowering health care cost." Rep. Paxton continued: "The growing cost of Medicaid already threatens the future fiscal health of Texas and Texans, yet the Obama Administration has chosen the same failed tax-and-spend model for health care reform."

The Texas Conservative Coalition officers cited several aspects of the legislation as particularly detrimental to Texas and Texans:

- A mandate for most legal residents of the United States to obtain health insurance;
- Health insurance "exchanges" through which certain individuals and families could receive federal subsidies with which to purchase health insurance;
- Significantly expanded eligibility for Medicaid; and,
- An excise tax on health insurance plans with relatively high premiums.

Rep. Harper-Brown added: "The Obama Administration and the majority in Congress have ignored the American people, choosing their own path which grows government, increases taxes, and erodes liberty. Significant elements of Obamacare have already been tried, and they have failed. Why impose upon Texans policy experiments that have gone terribly wrong?"

Founded in 1985, the Texas Conservative Coalition is the conservative caucus of the Texas Legislature.

###