

Passing health care reform now is vital to our economic recovery.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 29, 2009

CONTACT: Emily Barocas/202-225-7295

LARSON: NEW HEALTH CARE BILL VITAL FOR ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Washington, DC -- Congressman John B. Larson (*CT-01*), Chairman of the House Democratic Caucus, issued the following statement on the introduction of the Affordable Health Care for America Act.

“First, I would like to congratulate and commend our leadership team, Speaker Pelosi and Majority Leader Hoyer, as well as the chairmen of our committees who have worked tirelessly for months to put together this historic piece of legislation.□ American presidents since FDR have tried and failed to reform our health care system and now success is within sight.

“Passing health care reform now is vital to our economic recovery.□ One of the top reasons that companies are moving their operations overseas and taking American jobs with them is the growing burden of paying for health care in this country.□ Health care is also the biggest contributor to our national deficit.□ If we want to bring back those jobs, encourage companies to stay on American shores, grow our economy and improve our nation’s fiscal stability, we must reform our health care system.

“Since the beginning of August, the members of our Caucus have held almost 2000 events in their districts about health care. We heard from the American people about what matters most to them and we brought those ideas back to Washington to improve and update our health care legislation. The legislation we introduced today adheres to the same principles we laid out months ago. It brings stability and security to Americans who have insurance. It makes sure there is affordable coverage for those who don’t, and it reduces the unsustainable growth in the cost of health care, which has doubled in the last decade and may double again if we do nothing. But this legislation does so in a way that saves more money, lowering the deficit in the long term by reducing waste and fraud in our health care system, and provides more benefits to the American people.

“For average Americans this legislation will mean that you and your doctor – not insurance companies – are in charge when it comes to making important decisions about your health care. It means your insurance company can’t drop you because you “get too sick” and they can’t deny you coverage or charge you a higher rate because you’ve had cancer, diabetes, heart disease or any other pre-existing condition. For seniors, we are strengthening Medicare, making it solvent longer and improving care by encouraging doctors to coordinate and reduce inefficiencies. We are also closing the “donut hole” in the Medicare prescription drug program so no senior has to choose between paying for their prescriptions and putting food on their table.

“The battle for health care reform is far from over. But I am pleased to stand with my colleagues today for the American people in announcing that we are one big step closer to realizing our goals.”

###