

House Republican Press Release

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Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Frey Opposes Costly Universal Healthcare Bill



“Bill Would Bankrupt the State”

HARTFORD – State Representative John Frey, (R-Ridgefield) expressed concern over a bill approved by the Legislature’s Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee to create a mandated state-wide health insurance program all those who are uninsured.

The bill, HB-7396 An Act Establishing the State Health Insurance Purchasing Pool Program, creates a State Health Insurance Purchasing Pool (SHIPP) program and requires state residents to enroll in it if they are under 65 and do not have employer-sponsored health insurance coverage.

The bill requires the state Comptroller to contract with insurance companies and HMO's to provide insurance policies for SHIPP. Assuming that health insurance policies procured under the terms of the bill would cost between \$4,000 and \$6,000 per person annually, the total cost of the program would be between \$11,800,000,000 and \$17,700,000,000 (nearly the cost of the entire, current state budget) according to the legislative nonpartisan Office of Fiscal Analysis. The bill was stripped of its funding mechanism which means currently there is no way to pay for such a plan.

“In Connecticut, only about 7% of people are uninsured – a state with one of the lowest numbers of insured. This problem doesn't warrant a complete overhaul of our healthcare system, and it certainly doesn't mean that we should go to a socialized system that is proposed in the bill, said Rep. Frey, who serves as Minority Whip.

Rep. Frey continued, “The bill is an 11% tax on employers. This healthcare tax would kill jobs and probably force a large number of companies out of Connecticut. Any new tax would be a greater burden on small businesses which at the present time are struggling to get by each day. “

Rep. Frey added, “This one size fits all health care bill is utterly unworkable. The bills goals go too far and are completely unattainable. This is just another example of state government promising something without providing any funds to cover the program costs.”

“House Republicans have proposed common sense solutions this session to help insure people who currently do not have healthcare coverage. Such proposals as creating portable and flexible insurance plans which are consumer-directed friendly and allowing employees to offer the health insurance coverage their employees really want and need rather than imposing a “one size fits all” health insurance mandate on Connecticut businesses, employers should have options for covering younger adults between 19-26 thus encouraging businesses and insurance companies to provide a variety of plans that better meet the individual needs of their employees. In addition, we are supported of expanding programs to ensure that 100% of newborns – and every child – has health care.”

The bill awaits action in the State House, then if approved the bill moves to the State Senate for debate. For more information on the bill go to the General Assembly’s website: <http://www.cga.ct.gov>.

Representative Frey (R-111) from Ridgefield is serving his fifth term in the State House.