



JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

ROBERT F. BENNETT, CHAIRMAN

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Bennett Explores the Burdens of Health Services Regulation and the Challenges of Providing Care to the Uninsured

Washington, DC—In conjunction with *Cover the Uninsured Week*, Joint Economic Committee Chairman Robert F. Bennett held a hearing today to explore how over-regulating health care services has created significant increases in cost, and hampered quality and accessibility of care for many Americans. The committee also released a study today on “The Complex Challenge of the Uninsured.” The report takes a look at who is uninsured, the reasons they may be insured and ways that health care can be made more affordable.

Senator Bennett issued the following statement at the hearing:

“Health care is certainly a vital item in all our lives, and some regulations can improve its quality and even reduce its cost. However, there is a significant risk that the promised benefits of health services regulations will fall short of their costs if we don’t seek to rein them in.

“Health care is one of the most intensively regulated sectors of the U.S. economy. It is also one of the largest, accounting for \$1.7 trillion annual spending, which is more than 15% of gross domestic product (GDP).

“Much health regulation is premised on the judgment that most health care consumers don’t know, don’t want to know, and cannot know enough to make important decisions for themselves. I don’t know if that’s true often enough to justify the level of health regulation we have, but we hope to find that out today.

“Patients, consumers, and taxpayers are the ones who bear their ultimate costs of unnecessary regulation. Excessive regulatory burdens can also harm our most vulnerable individuals, and prevent the uninsured and lower-income health care consumers from accessing the health care they need.”

The Joint Economic Committee Report on “The Complex Challenge of the Uninsured” can be viewed at: <http://jec.senate.gov/files/Uninsured.pdf>

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