



Rising Health Care Costs Hurt America's Competitiveness

The United States spends \$2 trillion a year on health care, but the quality and availability of health care services are uneven. Skyrocketing health care costs are stifling the economic recovery and are financially devastating to hardworking American families.

Unless we deal with the problem of rising health care costs, more companies and families will be forced to drop coverage, adding to the millions of Americans without health insurance.

- Rising health care costs are one of the top cost pressures for businesses of all sizes.
- More than 160 million Americans receive health insurance through employer-sponsored plans (U.S. Census Bureau).

PPACA Did Not Fix Our System's Problems

- Despite the Chamber's opposition to the health care law, the Patient Protection and Accountability Act (PPACA) was enacted on March 23, 2010. The new law places onerous burdens on employers and creates over \$500 billion in new taxes, while failing to address the real problem: rising costs. Significant steps must be taken to improve health care quality, coverage, and affordability—without risking a government takeover or imposing crushing new mandates on business.
- The U.S. Chamber believes that employers drive innovation in health benefits and that market-driven health reforms are the best approach to reducing costs while promoting efficiency, wellness, and quality of care.

The U.S. Chamber's Health Care Agenda

- The U.S. Chamber's health care reform agenda seeks to expand access to affordable health care coverage, improve efficiency, and realign the system to keep people healthy. The Chamber's agenda includes:
 - **Repeal the Most Onerous Provisions of PPACA:** The new health care law creates new mandates and taxes on businesses and individuals. While we support repeal of PPACA, we realize the likelihood of that in the 112th Congress is unlikely. Therefore, we stand ready to work with Congress to repeal and fix the most egregious provisions – including repealing the Employer Mandate (S. 20), repealing many of the new taxes, and repealing the burdensome 1099 provision.
 - **Expanded Access to Care:** We will work to strengthen employer-sponsored health insurance and make it more available—and affordable—to every worker. We support leveling the playing field for individual consumers, families, and small businesses to purchase coverage while protecting the benefits of a uniform federal regulatory system (ERISA).
 - **Consumer-Focused Health Care:** Congress should make account-based plans more attractive to small businesses by increasing flexibility and improving the availability of cost and quality data so that Americans can “shop smart” for the best care. Foremost, Congress should repeal the ban on using FSAs and HSAs to purchase Over-the-Counter products with their funds, and also should repeal the limitation on FSA accounts to \$2,500. (H.R. 605/S.312)
 - **Medical Liability Reform:** The U.S. Chamber supports health courts and other medical liability reforms that ensure fair damage awards, eliminate frivolous lawsuits, and lower the costs of health care in the United States. (H.R. 5)