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Congresswoman Matsui Opposes House Republicans' Attempt to Repeal Health Care Reform

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (D-Sacramento), a Member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, voted against H.R. 2, House Republicans' effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act – the new health care law that was passed by both chambers of Congress and signed into law last March. The measure was passed by a 245-189 vote.

“This repeal measure will likely not be considered by the Senate, or enacted into law by the President, making today’s vote purely political,” remarked Congresswoman Matsui. “This Congress should be focused on creating jobs for the American people and restoring our economy, not repealing efforts to ensure access to affordable, high-quality care that is already making a difference for Sacramento families, seniors, and businesses. H.R. 2 does not do a single thing to create jobs, reduce the deficit, or help the middle class. Moreover, it would remove patents’ rights, recreate barriers to affordable health care, and put insurance companies back in control of health care decisions,” Congresswoman Matsui said.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee has calculated how repeal would affect Sacramentans specifically. Repeal would hurt Sacramento’s middle class by ending tax breaks and premium assistance that help approximately 934,000 families and 88,200 small businesses pay for coverage. Repeal would deny new preventive care benefits to over 650,000 seniors and raise prescription drug costs for over 66,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Sacramento. It would increase the number of uninsured in Sacramento by 278,000. Repeal would also increase the federal deficit by an estimated \$1 trillion over the next two decades.¹

Repeal would also eliminate thousands of jobs that are expected to be created by reducing

employer costs for health coverage and supporting more young people to go into the health work force. According to a recent study by the Center for American Progress and the University of Southern California, health care reform will lower costs for businesses and increase the number of jobs by up to 400,000 per year over the next decade. The Affordable Care Act is not only good for our nation's health, but also our nation's economy.

In Sacramento, the small business tax credits included in the Affordable Care Act have helped many local businesses save on their health care costs. From a communications firm that has cut their health costs by 25 percent, to a downtown café that plans to use the tax credit to reduce their business costs, and hire another full-time employee, the benefits of the new law are real.

Under the Republican repeal effort:

- Insurance companies will once again be able to drop people when they get sick – exactly when coverage is needed most;
- Children with pre-existing conditions will be denied coverage, while insurance companies would again impose devastating annual and lifetime caps;
- Young people will not be able to stay on their parents' plans until age 26;
- Pregnant women and breast cancer survivors can be denied coverage;
- Seniors will face an increase in their prescription drug costs – millions thrown back into the Medicare Part D Donut Hole. Repeal would deny seniors a 50% discount on prescription drugs, re-creating the devastating coverage gap.

“For years, I have heard from my constituents that we need to do something about skyrocketing health costs, crumbling coverage and out-of-control insurance companies,” added Rep. Matsui. “Now that we are addressing these problems, House Republicans want us to go back to the days when insurers were free to cancel your coverage or hike your premiums or deny your claims just to protect their profits. Unless we want to take coverage away from cancer patients, reduce oversight for insurance companies, raise prescription drug costs for seniors, weaken Medicare, add \$1 trillion to the deficit and undo dozens of other reforms that are improving health throughout our community, we simply cannot afford repeal.”

For more information on the health care law, and what repeal would mean, visit www.matsui.house.gov/healthcare

1 Congressional Budget Office Analysis of H.R. 2. Cbo.gov. January 6, 2011. http://www.cbo.gov/ftpdocs/120xx/doc12040/01-06-PPACA_Repeal.pdf

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