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Rep. Matsui Secures Key Priorities in Landmark Health Care Legislation
Starts Hearings on Health Care Reform

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-05) will participate in a week of health care hearings this week as Congress considers the comprehensive health care discussion draft released on Friday, which includes key priorities that Rep. Matsui has championed in the House of Representatives. The draft includes critical public health and prevention priorities, concepts she put forward in stand-alone legislation earlier this year: the Public Health Workforce Investment Act, H.R. 2810; and the Wellness Trust Act, H.R. 1940.

“I want to thank Doris Matsui for her outstanding leadership to help advance prevention measures in the health care discussion draft,” said Energy and Commerce Chairman Henry Waxman (CA-30). “As we move forward in crafting this legislation, I look forward to working with Rep. Matsui to ensure that preventive care is part of our solution to bring affordable, accessible health care to all Americans.”

The Energy and Commerce Committee will begin health care hearings today, continuing on Wednesday and Thursday of this week. Below are Congresswoman Matsui’s remarks as prepared for delivery:

“My home town of Sacramento is, in many ways, a microcosm of the challenges we face in our health care system today. From the coordinated care at Kaiser Permanente, to the cancer research institute at the U.C. Davis Medical Center, the alcohol- and drug-treatment program that Sutter Hospital runs with one of our community clinics, the brand-new cardiac care pavilion at Mercy General Hospital – Sacramento is a place where health care innovation is happening every single day.

“This is the part of Sacramento’s health care system that earned us a positive mention in the New Yorker article that you urged us all to read. At the same time, it says something about health care in this country that even in a place like Sacramento, where we have some of the best delivery models and most cutting-edge technology; we also face such serious problems.

“I met with a group of constituent primary care providers and community clinics last month who told me of their struggles providing care to the uninsured. Each of them had a story to tell about how difficult it is to manage a clinic when hundreds more people need subsidized care every single day. They told me of families walking through their doors for the first time because both parents have lost their jobs and their health insurance as a result.

“For these people, the community clinic is the only place they have to turn. For them, the legislation before us today offers a rare bit of hope and optimism in a world where health care looks increasingly out of reach for more and more of us.

“Mr. Chairman, I am particularly pleased with Section 2231 and Section 2301 of the draft bill. These sections build off legislation I wrote to create a Public Health Workforce Corps, and to centralize prevention spending in a Wellness Trust Fund. Public health and prevention are critical aspects of a strong health care system. They must be part of our national strategy to control health care costs, create better health outcomes for people, and ensure that the health care system works for all Americans.

“Without public health and prevention, we will never drive down health costs, nor will we move our society from one focused on treating sickness to one that promotes wellness and healthy living. I urge my colleagues to support these critical components of the draft bill before us today.”

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