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Matsui Telephone Town Hall Draws Over 11,000 Participants

11,328 Sacramentans Take Part In Conversation About Comprehensive Health Care Legislation

SACRAMENTO, CA – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (D-Sacramento) hosted a Telephone Town Hall Meeting last night to speak with Sacramento area residents about H.R. 3200, the America’s Affordable Health Choices Act, and was joined by 11,328 of her constituents.

“Thank you to everyone who joined my telephone town hall to discuss health insurance reform efforts being considered in Congress,” expressed Rep. Matsui. “Hearing from my constituents is invaluable, and I was grateful to all of those who shared their experiences and concerns with me. I believe that, by acting to improve our current health care system, we are taking an historic step in the right direction: one that will make the difference for many Sacramento families who are struggling to make ends meet. I look forward to continuing my conversations with my constituents over the next several weeks, particularly as we move forward to create a better solution to this economic and moral crisis that is putting enormous strains on Sacramento’s families.”

As a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction over the majority of health care issues, Congresswoman Matsui has been a long-time advocate of the need for health insurance reform. To that end, she has been meeting with doctors, nurses and health care professionals over the past several months to hear their thoughts and opinions on the health insurance reform legislation emerging in Congress. Rep. Matsui’s telephone town hall allowed her to hear from thousands of Sacramentans who were able to express their thoughts on ways to improve our current health system.

In addition to answering questions from over twenty constituents in neighborhoods throughout California's Fifth Congressional District, Congresswoman Matsui also asked each caller to share with her their thoughts on health care reform. Her first survey asked Sacramentans if they thought Congress should deal with the rising costs of health care; an overwhelming 75 percent of respondents answered "yes."

Rep. Matsui's second question asked if participants thought an in-person town hall would be helpful for them to learn more about the health care legislation. After 63 percent of respondents answered this question affirmatively, the Congresswoman announced she will organize an in-person town hall in Sacramento.

Congresswoman Matsui took questions from constituents on topics ranging from the bill's insurance reforms regarding pre-existing conditions, to the cost reductions contained in the bill, to insurance accessibility, and to the bill's strategies to guarantee access to coverage. She heard from people like Tammie in North Natomas, who "lived through a nightmare," when her child got sick. "I had excellent insurance but fought with my insurance company. I believe every child should be covered," Tammie said.

"Many of you on this call who have health insurance are probably asking – what is this health reform effort going to do for me?" Congresswoman Matsui said. "First, it is going to lower the costs you are already paying by capping your out-of-pocket expenses. Second, it prohibits lifetime limits on benefits, so if something unexpected happens; you don't have to worry about going bankrupt to cover the costs. This bill gives you more choices - and the peace of mind to know that you can get quality health care – whenever and wherever you may need it."

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