

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 17, 2007

Dear Speaker Madigan and Senate President Jones:

We are writing to ask that you support Governor Rod Blagojevich's proposed health care plan, Illinois Covered, during this overtime session of the Illinois General Assembly. We share his concern for the millions of working families and businesses in Illinois that are struggling with the rising costs of health care. The number of uninsured is rising sharply, and it is becoming increasingly difficult for businesses, especially small businesses, to provide health coverage for their employees and retirees.

Right now, as a member of the Illinois General Assembly, you have the opportunity to take action on an issue that affects all families and firmly establish Illinois as model state when it comes to meeting the health care of needs of all citizens. As I'm sure you are aware, states from California to Pennsylvania are also considering health care legislation, while Massachusetts is now in the process of implementing a program to provide health care for all citizens. And, just two weeks ago, the Wisconsin Senate voted strictly along party lines to pass "Healthy Wisconsin," which will fund a universal health care program through an employer assessment of up to 12 percent and an individual payroll tax.

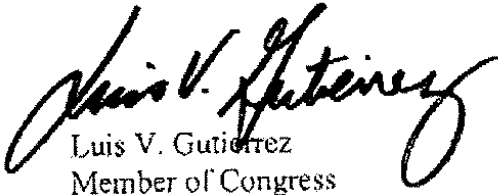
In addition to the 1.4 million Illinoisans who are uninsured, there are millions of working families whose premiums, co-pays and deductibles are becoming unaffordable. This means that people are foregoing preventative medical care, thereby driving up the costs of care and diminishing their quality of life. Many Illinoisans live in fear that an accident or illness will wipe out their savings and destroy their lives. Small businesses are being forced to reduce benefits, or drop coverage all together, because of rising premiums.

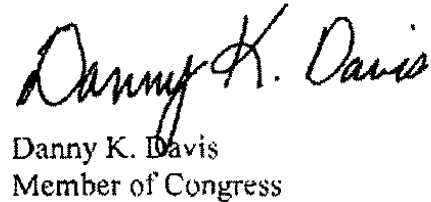
We believe Illinois must continue to be a leader in making health care affordable and accessible to its citizens by acting on this comprehensive plan to expand access to existing programs and create an affordable, quality option for all men and women, and small businesses. We believe health care costs are a shared responsibility, and that government, business and individuals are all responsible to pitch in and make it work.


Speaker Madigan and Senate President Jones
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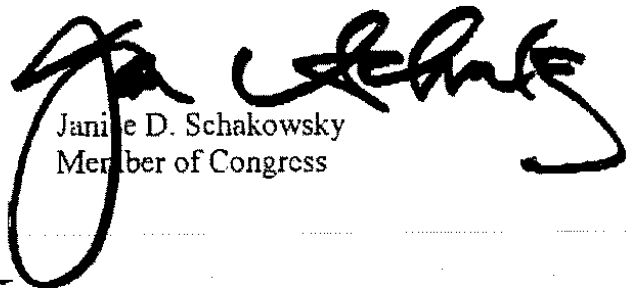
Illinois is in a position of national envy with a Democratic majority in both houses and a Democratic governor. We encourage you to use this opportunity to pass legislation that reflects the core principles of our party. Guaranteeing access to health care is one of those principles. We are urging you to pass Illinois Covered, and to continue to demonstrate to our State and our country that Illinois is a leader in providing for its citizens.

Sincerely,


Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress


Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress


Phil Hare
Member of Congress


Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress


Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress