

PRESS RELEASE

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CAHU AND NAHU WEIGH IN ON CURRENT FORM OF H. R. 3590

California and national leaders of the Association of Health Underwriters do not support current provisions in “*The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2009.*”

CAHU President, Juan R. Lopez said today that, “the State Association has been watching this process closely for potential impact to consumers in the State of California and we wholeheartedly agree with the assessment that NAHU CEO, Janet Trautwein has made.”

Monday, Janet Trautwein, CEO of the National Association of Health Underwriters (NAHU), issued the following statement regarding said health care legislation:

“*The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2009* contains many provisions that will drive up private health insurance costs significantly for millions of Americans families and businesses and disrupt the quality coverage on which millions of Americans rely.

“The minimum loss ratio requirements added to this legislation this past week will significantly and negatively impact coverage choice and affordability. While we agree with the goal of providing consumers with more value for health care dollars spent, the 80-85% minimum loss ratios required for the individual and group markets in this bill far exceed any similar state-level requirements. Most importantly, this requirement does not take into account the need to address underlying cost drivers in health care.

“This proposal also contains an unworkable individual mandate. If the individual mandate is not effective or enforceable, people could wait to buy coverage until they get sick, causing premiums to skyrocket significantly for everyone.

“NAHU does appreciate the provisions in this legislation that specifically ensures the role of licensed health insurance agents in state exchanges. However, we would like to see these provisions expanded and clarified to ensure that all policies provided through the exchanges be available for purchase through an agent or broker. Our nation’s agent and broker community could do a great deal to enroll currently uninsured Americans who would be eligible for purchasing assistance under this new measure.

“NAHU has grave concerns that H.R. 3590 will do much more to harm American health care consumers than help them as it is currently structured. Instead of voting on this flawed measure, we encourage members of Congress to work together on a bipartisan basis to develop an affordable and responsible means of achieving the needed reforms to our nation’s health care delivery system.”

The California Association of Health Underwriters, a State Chapter of the National Association of Health Underwriters, represents thousands of professional health insurance agents and brokers who provide consumer advocacy and health care insurance for hundreds of thousands of Californians.