

February 22, 2010

Washington, DC – Rep. Ben Ray Luján issued the following statement on President Obama's health insurance reform proposal, which was [posted this morning](#) .

“President Obama's health insurance reform proposal is another important step toward fixing our broken health insurance system,” said Rep. Luján. “I am encouraged that his proposal will lower drug costs for seniors, make health insurance more affordable, and take on insurance companies that try to unfairly raise rates. It also includes critical consumer protection provisions that will end insurance company discrimination and prevent unfair denials. The President says that he would like a plan that makes insurance more affordable, holds insurance companies accountable, and reduces the deficit—and the public option achieves these goals, lowering costs and potentially saving over \$100 billion. I believe that the final legislation should include a public option.”

Rep. Luján also commended President Barack Obama for including Indian health care in his [health insurance reform proposal](#) released today. In October, Rep. Luján joined his colleagues to [write to Congressional leadership](#) , urging them to include IHCIA in health insurance reform legislation. Reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) was included in the health reform bills passed by both the House of Representatives and the Senate. The first step in Indian health care reform is reauthorizing IHCIA, which governs the Indian Health Care System (IHS)—the provider of choice for many Native American patients. Unfortunately, IHCIA was last reauthorized in 1992, and that reauthorization expired eight years ago. The President's proposal would reauthorize the IHCIA and will allow much-needed reforms to the Indian Health Service to move forward.

“I'm encouraged that President Obama has included a reauthorization of the Indian Health Care system in his health insurance reform proposal,” said Rep. Luján. “Native Americans throughout my district have been asking for better access to quality, affordable health care, and the

reauthorization of the Indian Health Care system is an important step toward this goal. As health insurance reform advances, I will continue to fight to reauthorize the Indian Health Care system.”