

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico’s Third District highlighted a number of the important benefits that New Mexicans are receiving ahead of the second anniversary of the Affordable Care Act, which was signed into law on March 23, 2010.

“From seniors to young adults, only two years after health insurance reform was signed into law, people across New Mexico are already seeing some of the benefits of a law that puts an end to the insurance industry’s worst abuses,” Congressman Luján said. “No longer will New Mexicans have to worry their children will be denied care because of a pre-existing condition. Hard-working families across our state that have always paid their premiums will not have to live in fear that their insurance coverage will be canceled because they get sick.”

The Affordable Care and Patient Protection Act includes a number of important provisions that increase access to health care for the people of New Mexico. Seniors who rely on Medicare are receiving free preventive care and have received discounts on prescription drugs. Young adults can stay on their parents’ health plan until they turn 26 if they don’t have coverage of their own. Small businesses are receiving tax credits to help them offer health insurance to their employees.

In 2014, when the entire health insurance law takes effect, insurance companies will no longer be able to charge women higher premiums than men for the same coverage, nor will they be able to place annual limits on health care coverage. Millions of Americans without health insurance will have access to affordable care through Health Insurance Exchanges.

“Health insurance reform is putting New Mexicans in charge of their health care choices, not insurance companies, already giving thousands of people the peace of mind that when they need it most, they will have affordable, quality health care,” Luján added. “Republican efforts to repeal health insurance reform would put an end to these important provisions that expand access and prevent insurance company abuses.”

Health Care Reform by the Numbers

Seniors, young adults, and small businesses in the Third District have already started to benefit from the Affordable Care Act. In New Mexico's Third District:

- 64,000 seniors received preventive services through Medicare without having to pay a co-pay.
- 26,000 children and 100,000 adults now have health insurance that covers preventive services without co-pays.
- 5,500 seniors received prescription drug discounts worth \$2.6 million, an average discount of \$470 per senior.
- 480 small businesses received tax credits to help maintain or expand health care coverage for their employees.
- As many as 41,000 children with preexisting health conditions can no longer be denied coverage by insurance companies.
- 6,500 young adults have gained health coverage as a result of being able to remain on a parents' plan until age 26.

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