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## **HHS Announces Availability of \$51 Million in Resources for States to Build New Competitive Health Insurance Marketplace**

### ***HHS Also Soliciting Public Input in Developing Standards for Insurance Exchanges***

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) today announced two key steps in the process of partnering with states and other stakeholders to begin establishing health insurance Exchanges. HHS announced the availability of up to \$1 million in grants per state to help states begin work to establish Exchanges and published a request for comment calling for public input as HHS develops standards for the Exchanges.

Starting in 2014, health insurance Exchanges – new, competitive, consumer-centered health insurance marketplaces – will put greater control and greater choice in the hands of individuals and small businesses. The Exchanges will make purchasing health insurance easier by providing eligible consumers and businesses with “one-stop-shopping” where they can compare and purchase health insurance coverage. The Affordable Care Act authorized grants to the states to help them design and establish Exchanges in time for millions of Americans to choose their coverage for 2014.

“With most states struggling to keep their budgets in balance, these grants will give them the resources to conduct the research and planning needed to build the health insurance marketplace of the future,” said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. “We are working hand-in-hand with states as we carefully implement the Exchanges to make sure they best meet people’s health insurance needs.”

This first round of Exchange grants will give states resources to conduct the research and planning needed to build a better health insurance marketplace and determine how their Exchanges will be operated and governed.

Each state has the option to establish and operate its own Exchange or partner with another state or states to operate a regional Exchange. If a state decides not to create an Exchange for its residents, HHS will help establish one on their behalf. Grant applications are available at <http://www.healthcare.gov/center/grants> and are due by September 1, 2010.