

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 28, 2011

**CONTACT:** Mike Russo

U.S. PIRG Policy Analyst

**Phone:** (213)251-3680x332

**Email:** [mrusso@pirg.org](mailto:mrusso@pirg.org)

## Consumer Group Calls for New Competitive Health Care Marketplace

Washington, DC – State policy-makers can address rising health care costs by implementing an effective health insurance exchange, according to a report released today by consumer advocacy group U.S. PIRG.

“State leaders have the flexibility to craft an exchange that enhances choice and competition,” said U.S. PIRG Policy Analyst Mike Russo. “Consumers need this new exchange to lower costs and improve the quality of their coverage.”

The report, *Building a Better Health Care Marketplace*, details the steps policy-makers must take to ensure that the exchange lives up to its promise.

<http://www.uspirg.org/home/reports/report-archives/health-care/health-care/building-a-better-health-care-marketplace>

“To succeed, this new health insurance marketplace must be run by and for businesses and consumers, not by and for the insurance lobby,” said Russo. “It needs to have the power to negotiate for lower premiums and push for reforms that improve the quality of care. It needs to be consumer-friendly. And it needs to be big and stable. As state policymakers create an exchange, they should focus on delivering results for consumers.”

Already states around the country have begun to take action, considering and passing legislation creating exchanges.

“Insurers and other special interests will try to undermine the exchange by preventing it from negotiating and keeping consumers in the dark about the value of their coverage,” Russo concluded, “but our leaders have to stand up for consumers. Making the health care marketplace more competitive is the best opportunity we have to give consumers more power and lower costs.”

###

*U.S. PIRG*, the federation of state Public Interest Research Groups, is a non-profit, non-partisan public interest advocacy organization. For more information, visit <http://www.uspirg.org>.

For more on U.S. PIRG's Making Health Care Work Campaign click [here](#).

(<http://www.uspirg.org/health-care/health-care-campaign>)