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PRESS RELEASE

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Legislation Seeks Transparency for Health Care Waivers

Washington, D.C. – Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) and Senator John Ensign (R-NV) today announced the introduction of the Health Care Waiver Transparency Act which will require greater transparency in healthcare waiver applications.

“The American people have a right to know the criteria the federal government is using to grant or deny healthcare law waivers,” said Rep. Issa. “Congress shouldn’t allow the curtain of secrecy that shaded negotiations of the new healthcare bill to now cover-up how the Administration is dealing with cases where the law threatens to cost Americans their health insurance or endure other hardships. This bill will shine some needed sunlight on what’s happening.”

“Small businesses across my state have been struggling with the high costs of the healthcare law,” said Sen. Ensign. “My amendment will require full transparency of waiver applications to ensure that larger employers and groups with political clout do not crowd out the small businesses who are being hit with the high costs of this unconstitutional law. Democrats continue to tout the benefits of the healthcare reform, yet some of their biggest political contributors such as labor unions are filing for waivers. The more than one thousand waivers that have already been granted should send a strong signal of how economically damaging this law is, and now more than ever we need to work toward full repeal.”

Highlights of the Health Care Waiver Transparency Act

Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) shall:

- Publish detailed criteria to determine approval of an application submitted by a group health plan, health insurance issuer, employer, state, municipality, or other entity eligible for a waiver, adjustment or other compliance relief under the health reform law

- Publish each application for a waiver on the HHS website

- Publish the approval or rejection of each application and the reason for the decision on the HHS website

- Prohibit preferential treatment to be given to an applicant based on political contributions or association with a labor union, a health plan provided for under a collective bargaining unit, or another organized labor group.

Click here for the full text of H.R. 1184, the House version of the Health Care Waiver Transparency Act <http://issa.house.gov/images/stories/BILLS-112hr1184ih.pdf>