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Harkin Statement on Virginia Court Decision

WASHINGTON, D.C. –

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP), released the following statement on today's ruling by a federal district judge in Virginia in a case filed by Virginia's attorney general, a Republican named Kenneth Cuccinelli, challenging a provision of the Affordable Care Act:

"On the merits, the Virginia Attorney General's suit is clearly wrong. When people seek medical care without health insurance and don't pay for it, they aren't opting out' of the health care market. Instead, it adds more than \$1,000 per year to the premiums of American families who act responsibly by having coverage. This clearly affects interstate commerce and is thus within Congress' power to regulate.

"Two federal courts in Michigan and Virginia have already dismissed similar cases, and the Virginia court should have followed their lead. I'm confident that the appellate courts and the Supreme Court will find the Affordable Care Act constitutional and in doing so, ensure that Americans keep crucial new protections against the unfair practices of insurance companies."