

News Release

Consumers Union – Nonprofit Publisher of Consumer Reports

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Consumers Union on House Debate to Repeal Health Reform Law

WASHINGTON, D.C.-- Jim Guest, President and CEO of Consumers Union, today made the following statement as the House debated whether to repeal the health reform law. Consumers Union is the independent, nonprofit publisher of *Consumer Reports* magazine.

"Looking at the changes in health care in the ten months since the law was passed, we're optimistic that the country is on the right path to fixing many of the problems that have dogged us for decades," Guest said. "The law's not perfect, but it would go a long way toward improving health care for consumers. For the first time in generations, our country is beginning to make real strides toward health care that offers greater choice and value to consumers and their doctors. The law ought to be given a chance to work."

Guest cited several examples of reforms provided by the law:

- Insurance companies can no longer cancel your coverage without cause when you get ill, and they can't put lifetime dollar limits on your benefits.
- If you have a sick child, insurers can no longer deny health coverage because of your child's pre-existing condition. And insurers won't be able to deny coverage for anyone because of pre-existing conditions, or base the cost of coverage on those conditions, by 2014.
- Parents now have the choice of keeping their kids on their health plans up to age 26, provided their children don't already have access to their own employer coverage.
- If you're on Medicare, you can now get annual check-ups, immunizations, and screenings for cancer, diabetes, and other conditions without being charged a co-payment. Plus, Medicare recipients can get substantial discounts on prescription drugs if they have a coverage gap (known as the "donut hole").
- There are new limits on how much of your premium insurers can spend on advertising, CEO bonuses, and other items that aren't directly related to your medical care. And the law sets up a stronger system for states to review unreasonable premium increases.
- Small business owners are now eligible for tax credits for up to 35 percent of what the employer spends on health coverage.

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