

Davis Statement on the Health Reform Bill

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Statement of Congressman Danny K. Davis

Congressional Black Caucus Press Conference

Stating Their Position on the Health Reform Bill

I am Congressman Danny K. Davis from the 7th District of Illinois. I serve on the House Ways and Means Committee and was at the table as many of the provisions of this bill were being hammered out. I am pleased to serve under the leadership of Delegate Donna Christiansen as a co-chairman of the CBC Health Braintrust.

First of all I commend our leadership, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, Whip Jim Clyburn, Chairmen Rangel, Miller, Waxman and all members of our leadership team for their outstanding and effective leadership during this process. I also commend our caucus Chairperson Barbara Lee and our Health Braintrust Chairman Donna Christiansen for making sure that the priority health issues of Black America are addressed in the bill. Their advocacy and leadership was exemplary and tremendously effective.

There is no such thing as a perfect bill. We support this bill and will vote for it because it will be the best thing that has happened for health care in this country since the passage of Medicare and Medicaid. Thirty million people in this country will have health insurance coverage who currently do not have it.

They will be able to see a doctor on a regular basis and not rely upon emergency rooms for entrance to the health care delivery system. This bill will make healthcare affordable to millions of people who have never had insurance before in their lives.

It promotes individual responsibility, it allows small businesses to cover their employees, it gets rid of the donut hole in prescription coverage in Medicare for senior citizens, it protects Medicaid payments for primary care physicians, it protects community choice for individuals requiring institutionalized care - money will follow the person. It sets up additional mechanisms to ferret our waste, fraud and

abuse, it increases funding and provides for expansion of community health centers to the tune of \$11 billion. It funds maternal and child health programs such as home visiting.

It invests in students and families, it provides mandatory funding for Pell Grants, appropriates \$150 million for College Access Challenge Grant - invests in minority serving institutions such as Historically Black, PBI, Hispanic Serving, Native American, Asian American and other minority institutions, it reforms student loans to put more money in the hands of students and not-for-profits. It takes some of the profit out of student loans.

This bill is good for the 7th District of Illinois. It is good for America, it is good for Black America.

We support it and recommend that everyone vote for it.