

"For years, I have listened to stories from New Yorkers who have struggled with the rising cost of health insurance premiums and an endless stream of deductibles, co-pays and fees. I have talked with small business owners who struggle to provide good benefits to their employees, and I have heard from seniors who still find it hard to afford the life-saving prescription drugs they need. Now, after two generations of waiting, those who have carried the physical pain and economic burden of our broken health care system will finally begin to see the relief they so desperately need. The Affordable Care Act isn't perfect, but it's a great leap forward for our family members, friends and neighbors who have for too long been abused by the health insurance industry." - Maurice

- **Improved Choice and Competition:** In the last ten years, insurance premiums rose three times faster than wages. To help control costs and expand access to health insurance, new state-run Health Insurance Exchanges will be created in 2014 in which the uninsured, self-employed, small business owners and their employees can comparison shop for the private insurance option that is right for them.

- **New Rules to Hold Insurance Companies Accountable:** Under the new health care law, insurers are now barred from denying coverage to children based on a pre-existing condition or dropping a person's coverage when they get sick. Coverage for adults with a pre-existing condition is available now through 2014 when the Health Insurance Exchanges become available and lifetime limits on coverage will be eliminated. Starting in 2011, insurance companies will be required to spend at least 80% of premiums on care and less on profits and CEO pay.

- **Affordable Options for the Uninsured:** To help the 47,000 New Yorkers in our congressional district who are not currently insured, the health care reform law expands eligibility for Medicaid and provides tax credits to families and small business owners to make private insurance more affordable. It also allows young adults to remain on their parents' insurance until they turn 26.

- **Improved Medicare Benefits:** The health care reform measure strengthens Medicare's long term solvency and improves benefits with expanded home-based services to keep people in their homes instead of nursing homes, makes prescription drugs more affordable and provides free coverage for preventive health screenings

How Does Health Care Reform Affect You?

- **Middle-Class Families:** Families will save thousands each year through new protections, improved choice and competition, and a cap on annual out-of-pocket expenses. Affordability tax credits will also be available for individuals with an annual income of up to \$44,320 and for a family of four with an income of up to \$88,200 who get their coverage through the new Health Insurance Exchanges.

- **Small Business Owners:** To make coverage more affordable, up to 15,100 small businesses in our congressional district will immediately be eligible for a tax credit of up to 35% of the cost of premiums. The credit will rise to cover up to 50% of premiums by 2014.

- **Women:** The industry practice of “gender-rating,” which requires women to pay more than men for the same coverage, will end. Discrimination based on a past pregnancy, C-section or domestic violence incident will also end.
- **Seniors:** The reform bill strengthens Medicare by providing free annual wellness visits, eliminates co-payments for preventive care, and closes the gap in prescription drug coverage known as the “donut hole.”
- **Young Adults:** Young Adults will now be allowed to stay on their parents’ insurance until their 26th birthday.

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