



AMERICAN BENEFITS
COUNCIL

NEWS RELEASE

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COBRA health plan support desperately needed *Council strongly endorses Worker Health Coverage Protection Act*

WASHINGTON, DC – “Employer-sponsored health care coverage isn’t just the coverage people like and want to keep – for many, it is the last line of defense in a public health crisis,” American Benefits Council President James A. Klein said today. “That is why we call upon Congress to move quickly on the Worker Health Coverage Protection Act.”

The measure, sponsored by Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL), Catherine Cortez-Masto (D-NV), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), and Mark Warner (D-VA), provides for full funding of COBRA continuation coverage provided by employers to those who have been laid off. It is the companion bill to a similar provision passed by the U.S. House of Representatives as part of the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act (H.R. 6800). While the measure needs to be clarified to include similar coverage for furloughed workers and for church workers, it remains a vital part of pandemic relief for displaced workers.

“Encouraging people to remain in employer coverage makes the most sense for everyone,” Klein said. “Individuals and families can keep their coverage without resetting deductibles or finding new providers. Budget-strapped states can avoid swollen Medicaid rolls. And employers can keep furloughed employees in the plan in the hopes that they can return to the workplace soon.”

While the legislative agenda and the likelihood of additional pandemic relief measures are uncertain, the Council is determined to push for passage of this important measure.

“Subsidizing COBRA coverage is a time-tested and simple way to deliver much-needed peace of mind to the families of workers who have lost their jobs. The Council is eager to work with Congress to perfect this provision and achieve its enactment,” Klein said.

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For more information, or to arrange an interview with the Council's health policy team, contact Jason Hammersla, Council vice president, communications, at jhammersla@abcstaff.org or by phone at (202) 422-4652 (cell).

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The Council is a public policy organization whose members include over 220 of the world's largest corporations, as ranked by Fortune and Forbes. Collectively, the Council's members either directly sponsor or administer health and retirement benefits for virtually all Americans covered by employer-sponsored plans.