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Policymakers should recognize, build on innovative efforts of employer health plan sponsors

Congress urged to minimize obstacles, administrative burdens

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a statement submitted today to the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, the American Benefits Council described how employers are leading the way in striving for lower prices and better quality in the nation's health care system.

The testimony builds on [Leading the Way: Employer Innovations in Health Coverage](#), a recent report from the Council and Mercer showing how employer providers of health coverage are succeeding at lowering costs and improving the quality of service through innovation, as well as [American Benefits Legacy: The Unique Value of Employer Sponsorship](#), a new report by the Council that details the important contribution employer-sponsored benefits make to the health and financial security of American workers, their families and the economy.

“Many of these innovations have met with startling success and — if recognized, scaled and promoted — have the potential to fundamentally improve the health care system as a whole,” the Council said in its statement. “The ability to achieve large-scale improvements to our health care system exponentially increases when private sector employers are working hand in glove with policymakers and public payers to adopt and encourage these innovations.”

The statement concludes with a set of [policy suggestions](#) designed to support ongoing employer innovation, including:

- Protect the longstanding tax treatment of employer-provided health coverage by fully repealing the so-called “Cadillac Tax” on employer-provided health coverage and rejecting any new proposals to tax employees’ health benefits.
- Modernize health savings accounts.
- Support greater quality and price transparency in the healthcare system.
- Repeal the Affordable Care Act employer mandate penalty.

- Preserve ERISA's uniform standard for plan administration.

[The IDEA Institute](#) (Innovations in Design, Employers in Action), a new website hosted by the Council, includes these and other stories, and will be continually updated with fresh innovations from the employer community.

For more information on health policy and innovation, or to arrange an interview with Council Senior Vice President, Health Policy, Ilyse Schuman, please contact Jason Hammersla, vice president, communications, at jhammersla@abcstaff.org or by phone at (202) 289-6700 (office) or (202) 422-4652 (cell).

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The American Benefits Council is the national trade association for companies concerned about federal legislation and regulations affecting all aspects of the employee benefits system. The Council's members represent the entire spectrum of the private employee benefits community and either sponsor directly or administer retirement and health plans covering more than 100 million Americans.