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NEWS RELEASE

For additional information:

Jason Hammersla
202-289-6700

HRA provisions of health care executive order would improve access to affordable coverage

Overlooked feature grants additional flexibility to employers

WASHINGTON, DC – “The health reimbursement arrangement (HRA) provision of President Trump’s executive order gives employers more flexibility in the benefits they offer employees,” Katy Spangler, the Council’s senior vice president, health policy, said today.

“The Council is a long-time supporter of giving employers more tools for their tool boxes, and this Executive Order directs the agencies to do just that. We look forward to working with the agencies to implement this in a way that continues to protect employees from discrimination and protects the individual market from adverse selection,” Spangler said.

HRAs are employer-sponsored accounts funded with pre-tax dollars and used to pay for premiums and other qualified medical expenses. Under [IRS Notice 2013-54](#), employers are effectively prevented from offering stand-alone HRAs that would allow employees to purchase coverage on the individual market with pre-tax dollars. The Council strongly advocated for such a measure in its [Magnifying A 2020 Vision: A Closer Look at Selected Proposals to Strengthen Employer-Sponsored Health Benefits](#).

“In light of today’s release, the Council and its large employer members strongly support a healthy and viable individual health insurance marketplace,” Spangler said. [The full slate of Council health care policy priorities](#) was articulated in its May 25 letter to Senate Finance Committee Chairman Orrin Hatch (R-UT).

For more information on retirement policy matters, or to arrange an interview with Spangler, contact Jason Hammersla, Council senior director of 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.