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## **Rep. Rob Andrews (D-NJ) Statement at the Hearing on “The Recent Health Care Law: Consequences for Indiana Families and Workers.”**

*WASHINGTON, D.C. – Below are the prepared remarks of U.S. Rep. Rob Andrews (D-NJ), the senior Democrat on the Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce for the field hearing on “The Recent Health Care Law: Consequences for Indiana Families and Workers.”*

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Last week’s unemployment report reinforces the urgent need for the Congress to have a laser-like focus on jobs. Unfortunately, the committee has not taken up a single piece of jobs legislation this year. Instead, today’s hearing continues fighting the battles of the past, with the fourth hearing this year attacking the Affordable Care Act.

This health care reform law gives American families new protections against the worst abuses of the insurance industry. In the coming years, it will extend access to affordable, quality health care to those without it. And it contains critical measures to keep rising health care costs under control, without rationing care. Getting a handle on out-of-control health care costs is one of the keys to our long-term economic growth.

The Affordable Care Act became law over a year ago. While it takes multiple years to implement, it has already begun to deliver positive results for Indiana families, children, and small and large employers.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, nearly 90,000 Hoosier seniors who hit the Medicare prescription drug donut hole paid less for their medications last year. Each received a \$250 rebate check for a total savings of \$22.4 million dollars. This year seniors who hit the donut hole are saving an average of \$800.

One million seniors in Indiana may receive free preventive services and an annual wellness visit.

More than 80,000 small employers in Indiana may pay lower health care costs as a result of the law’s small business tax credit.

Nearly four million Indiana residents are now protected against lifetime limit caps on their

coverage and 3.5 million are protected against restrictive annual limit caps.

Nearly 300,000 Hoosiers are now protected against having their insurance company drop their health coverage when they need it the most.

More than 20,000 young adults in the state may now have coverage through their parent's health plan.

More than 200 employers and their employees are paying less for retiree health care by joining the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program.

The law has also been good for Indiana's economy by infusing millions of dollars in grant money to help the state strengthen its health care system. Indiana has received funding to develop a health insurance exchange, strengthen and potentially construct new community health centers, support prevention and health programs and invest in groundbreaking biomedical research.

Specifically, the state has received:

- More than \$7 million toward the state's development of the health insurance exchange. The health insurance exchanges are a cornerstone of the Affordable Care Act that will allow consumers to shop for quality affordable health care of their choice.
- More than \$550,000 for community and clinical prevention activities.
- Nearly \$1 million for primary care training to expand the state's primary care workforce.
- More than \$10 million to support 46 projects in the state that show potential in producing new and cost-saving therapies. These grants and tax credit also support good jobs and increase U.S. competitiveness.

Repeal of the Affordable Care Act would repeal all of these protections for individuals, families, and employers. It would repeal economic benefits for Indiana. And it would return inordinate power over our health care to the health insurance companies.

My Republican colleagues have not just proposed repeal of these benefits. They have an additional proposal these days: ending Medicare. The Republican plan will force seniors to pay more for health care coverage and prescription medications and jeopardize their right to long-term care benefits.

Under the Republican plan to end Medicare, an Indiana senior would be forced to pay more than \$6,000 in higher annual health care costs in 2022 and \$12,000 more by 2032, as well as an additional \$9,800 in prescription drug costs over the next decade. For seniors and those with disabilities in Indiana's 8<sup>th</sup> congressional district, the Republican plan could increase preventive care costs by \$293 million over the next decade. In addition, the more than 3,000 residents in nursing homes whose expenses are paid by Medicaid would be left without the care they need.

The Republican plan will have a devastating impact not only on seniors but also on young people right now who will no longer be able to depend on Medicare or a dignified retirement.

To cover the additional health care costs under the Republican plan, a 54-year-old today will need to save more than \$180,000 by the time she retires. That is over and above what she should already be trying to save for a normal retirement.

And for those who are younger, the costs are even higher. A 25-year old will need more than half a million dollars in additional retirement savings to pay for their health care under the Republican plan.

The Affordable Care Act has now been debated for nearly three years. Re-litigating past fights will not move this country forward. The middle class has been under a decades-long squeeze. The last thing working families need right now is to have hard-won health care rights, like the guarantee of Medicare or the protections of the Affordable Care Act, taken from them.

There are better ways to spend our time in Congress, such as working together to grow and strengthen, rather than weaken, the middle class. Our focus should be on creating good jobs here in America.

<http://democrats.edworkforce.house.gov>