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## **TEXANS ARE AMONG THE BIGGEST WINNERS IN LAST NIGHT'S VOTE FOR HISTORIC HEALTH CARE REFORM**

Texans are among the biggest winners in last night's historic vote by the U.S. House of Representatives to enact fundamental health care system reforms. With more than one in four Texans currently lacking health care insurance and runaway premiums adding daily to that 6.1 million count, relief cannot not come too soon for our overburdened health care system. In addition to providing new economic security to millions of Texas families, the national health reform bill will also bring billions of dollars back to Texas each year through health insurance tax credits for middle class and low-income Texans, and Medicaid coverage for our poorest citizens.

"Medicaid expansion to cover working poor parents of children on Texas Medicaid today will be 100 percent federally funded for three years, with the state getting nine federal dollars for each state dollar from 2020 on forward," said CPPPP associate director Anne Dunkelberg. "Twice as many now-uninsured Texans will gain coverage by purchasing affordable private insurance through the new Health Insurance Exchange as will gain Medicaid, bringing even more federal dollars to Texas with no state matching dollars required."

This reform keeps in place our large and robust private insurance and health care delivery sector, while filling the gaps that have left too many Texans lacking care or overwhelmed by debt. Our state leadership should move promptly and in good faith to facilitate the implementation of health insurance reforms. Texans can look to the establishment of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and our response to Hurricane Ike as recent examples of the excellent performance of which our state government is capable when it has the backing of leadership.

Providing equal access to affordable health care will remove a crippling barrier to real equality of opportunity for Texans and Americans. CPPPP applauds Congress for taking this long-overdue step forward. We pledge to help Texans learn about this legislation, and about what we need to do here in Texas to ensure the maximum benefits of reform for our citizens.

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*The Center for Public Policy Priorities (CPPPP) is a non-profit, non-partisan policy institute dedicated to improving the economic and social conditions of low- and moderate-income Texans. You can learn more about CPPPP at <http://www.cphp.org>.*