



# NEWS

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**From the Illinois State Senate**  
***State Senator Dave Koehler***

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**Further information:**  
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**Koehler: Preparing for Insurance Reform Will Save Money, Boost Efficiency**

SPRINGFIELD—State Sen. Dave Koehler’s (D-Peoria) effort to prepare for national health care reform has passed both houses of the Illinois General Assembly and now goes to the governor.

Senate Bill 3047 creates the Health Care Justice Implementation Task Force. This task force will study the new federal health care laws to identify any changes that may be needed in state law or administrative policies.

“The federal government’s comprehensive health care reform law is going to mean big changes at the state level,” Koehler said. “We need to be sure we approach those changes in the right way. If we are careful, we can potentially save the state money and make it easier for the residents of Illinois to meet the laws requirements.”

The task force is modeled on the state’s Adequate Health Care Task Force, which was created in 2004. It will have 29 members—five appointed by the governor and six appointed by each of the legislative leaders. These members will represent health care professionals, members of the insurance industry, labor leaders, business interests, and other concerned parties. They will work together to provide a report to the governor and General Assembly by March 2012.

“Health care is a basic need, like food, clothing, and shelter,” Koehler said. “I believe that this health care reform is a strong step in the right direction, and I want to be sure we implement it properly and keep all the stakeholders involved in the process.”

The United States Department of Health and Human Services estimates that 1.8 million uninsured Illinoisans will now be eligible for insurance, and another 612,000 Illinois residents will be able to qualify for more affordable group insurance. The federal law also helps make insurance more affordable for seniors, small businesses, and the State.

“The federal law makes many beneficial changes, but it also has a lot of moving parts,” Koehler said. “They’ve given us some time to implement it, and I believe we should use that time to ensure that we are truly prepared.”

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