



## The New Mexico Health Security Act: Why Passage in 2011 Is So Important

*Clearly we need to push our Congressional delegation to amend the national health reform law so states can apply for waivers before 2014. This is the date when states are required to set up entities called insurance exchanges, which would offer policies to the uninsured not eligible for public plans and to small businesses. Currently the law only allows states to apply for waivers in 2017.*

*While working to remove the 2017 date is extremely important, it is also absolutely critical to promote the passage of the Health Security Act in 2011.*

*Why is this the case?*

- Passage of the Health Security Act sends a clear message to our delegation that our state doesn't want to be forced to create an exchange.
- Two studies have shown that New Mexico will save hundreds of millions of dollars by setting up its own plan that self-insures most residents.
- It does not make sense for New Mexico to be forced to invest time, money and resources in an exchange that many experts say won't cover everyone and won't control premiums and rising health care costs.
- The more states that pass legislation that sets up different models from that of an exchange, the greater the pressure on Congress to change the date for allowing waivers.
- Passing the Health Security Act will help the national effort to provide affordable coverage to everyone and control costs.
- If a state can develop its own solution that ensures that its residents have affordable health coverage and controls rising health costs, it should be allowed to do so.
- There is immense public support in New Mexico for the home-grown Health Security Plan (over 145 organizations, 32 cities and counties, and thousands of residents support this proposal).
- Under the Health Security Act's go-slow approach, passing the legislation in 2011 will enable the plan to be up and running in 2014.

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