

Says balanced approach is a victory for middle class families

Washington, DC – Today, Rep. Walz announced he will support legislation that protects middle class families, provides them with meaningful benefits and ensures that they have control over their own health care decisions. This legislation holds insurance companies accountable. Insurance companies will be banned from denying coverage to Americans with pre-existing conditions and dropping someone from their coverage when they get sick. It gives Americans more choice and brings down cost for everyone.

He released the following statement:

*“Middle class families in southern Minnesota want to visit their doctor and get the care they need without insurance company or government control. They want hassle free coverage they can count on and they want peace of mind knowing that if they get sick, they will not have to worry about insurance companies dropping them.”*

*For the past three years, I have traveled around southern Minnesota hearing from folks about how we can improve our health care system. Those who have shared their stories with me are honest, hard working people. They do not want a handout or special treatment. They just want a fair deal. One of those folks is Sheila Wieser. When Sheila's son, Michael, got sick with a rare liver disease, she just wanted to be able to get him the care he needed to get well. Michael was kicked off his parents insurance when he graduated college and because he had a pre-existing condition, no insurance company would give him coverage. By the time Sheila was able to get Michael any help at all, his disease was too advanced and he died. No mother should ever have to experience that and if this legislation had been passed years ago, Michael might still be with us today.*

*I also voted for this legislation because it is the fiscally responsible thing to do. Since first coming to Congress, I have actively worked to find ways to reduce the skyrocketing, long-term federal debt. Let me be clear: We cannot tackle our debt without addressing the out of control cost of health care and we cannot rebuild a strong, vibrant economy while businesses are strangled financially and forced to choose between cutting salaries or health insurance for their employees. I cannot in good conscience pass on a skyrocketing debt and a broken health care system for our children and our grandchildren to deal with, they deserve better than kicking the can down the road for another day.*

*I am particularly proud of the pay for results provisions we fought for in this legislation. This is a patient-centered provision that is about using a market-based, business solution to provide high quality, low cost health care. Every single day, Mayo Clinic is an example of how health care should be practiced in this country and I was proud of our efforts to ensure that doctors are paid*

*for the quality of care that you get and not just the number of treatments and procedures you go through.*

*This legislation is not perfect. I have often said health care reform is a journey, not a destination. As we move forward, I will work closely with doctors, nurses, hospital, employers, small businesses and southern Minnesotans to ensure that this legislation is implemented in a fair, common sense way.”*