



United Service Association For Health Care (USA+) is a non-profit corporation chartered in Washington, D.C., in 1983. In November of 1987, the USA+ Membership program became one of the first group association Benefit Programs set up to provide the small business owner, his family and employees with a quality benefits package previously available only to employees of large corporations.

USA+ is committed to the promotion of equal access to health care for all citizens of the United States, but more specifically, for members of our association. We stay abreast of legislation proposed by state regulators that may have an adverse or favorable impact on our membership population. When necessary, we contact regulators in order to have an opportunity to convey the views of the association's members.

With 2008 being an election year, the cost of health care is again one of the most debated subjects among Americans and Congress has been involved in an intense debate over health care policy.

The bills listed below provide a brief summary of a few of the bills that will most likely guide health care reform discussions through the end of the year into the next Congress.

The Small Business Health Options Program (SHOP Act)

The goal of the SHOP Act is to provide coverage for small businesses (1-99 employees) and the self-employed through expanded state health insurance pools. The bill would also allow professional and trade associations to create cross-state pools to negotiate and purchase health insurance for its members. Employers that participate and provide coverage thru the state pools would not be able to offer any other coverage to its employees. Employers that pay at least 60% of an employee's insurance premiums would receive tax credits of \$1,000, \$1,500 or \$2,000 based on family composition.

Healthy Americans Private Insurance Act (HAPI)

The bill seeks to require all Americans to have insurance. All individuals would be required to enroll in a HAPI plan unless covered under Medicare, the Veteran's Administration, Indian Health Service, Department of Defense or a former employer. Penalties would be assessed for those individuals without coverage. Employers would no longer pay a portion of the employee's health insurance premium. Instead, the employer would add the amount of the premium to the

employee's wages and would also be required to make shared responsibility payments each year based on the product of the number of full time employees multiplied by a percentage factor.

Full subsidies would cover health insurance premiums for individuals with an adjusted gross income that is below 100% of the poverty line, with partial subsidies for individuals at or above 100% of the poverty line. Premiums discounts would be available to individuals that participate in wellness programs.

Individuals that participate in the program would receive tax credits ranging from \$1,810 to \$4,565, based on family composition.

The Fully Funded Small Business Health Insurance Cooperative Act of 2008

This bill would allow the formation of small business cooperatives for the purpose of insuring against the risk of catastrophic claims. A cooperative is an association or financial cooperative organization that chooses to incorporate under any state's captive insurance laws, has more than 100 members and 5,000 lives and creates a captive insurance company for the purpose of assuming and spreading risk. Each Small Business Owner (SBO) would become a member of the cooperative.

Small Business Owners would provide health insurance coverage to employees that would cover \$10,000 - \$250,000 of covered claims per year and the Cooperative would provide excess coverage for the amounts over this range. The Small Business Owner would pay 65% of the premium for individuals and 35% for families, and would be encouraged to participate through a 65% tax subsidy.

These bills have bipartisan support as well as support from specific industries and organizations. If you would like to receive additional information on these bills, or if you need any additional information, please feel free to contact us at 800-872-1187 or write to us at: USA+, P.O Box 200905, Arlington, TX 76006. And remember, together, we can make a difference.