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Benefits of Health Care Reform in Whittier

Committee on Energy and Commerce, Democratic Staff

On September 24, 2012, Rep. Henry A. Waxman released a report on the benefits the Affordable Care Act is providing throughout Los Angeles County. This appendix summarizes the benefits of this historic legislation in Whittier.

In Whittier, the benefits of health reform are significant:

- **57,000** residents of Whittier with private insurance will receive an easy-to-understand summary of their health benefits and coverage, including a standardized “coverage examples” section that uses a format modeled on the nutrition facts label for food.
- **2,000 young adults** in Whittier who would otherwise be uninsured now have health insurance through their parents’ health care plans.
- **16,000 seniors** in Whittier received Medicare preventive services without paying any co-pays, coinsurance, or deductibles in 2011, and 11,000 seniors have received these free services so far in 2012.
- **1,700 seniors** in Whittier received new Medicare Part D prescription drug discounts worth \$720,000 in 2011, an average discount of up to \$420 per senior. So far in 2012, more than 580 seniors have received prescription drug discounts.
- **13,000 women** in Whittier can now receive preventive benefits such as well-woman visits, FDA-approved contraception, and gestational diabetes screenings at no charge.
- **5,200 children** in Whittier with preexisting health conditions can no longer be denied insurance coverage.
- **29,000** residents of Whittier are protected from excessive rate increases by new limits on the amount of money that health insurers can spend on administrative expenses and profits and the requirement that health insurers justify rate increases of 10% or more.
- **38,000** residents of Whittier no longer have lifetime limits on their insurance coverage.
- **120 small businesses** in Whittier have received tax credits to help maintain or expand health care coverage for their 700 employees.

In addition, when the law goes fully into effect in 2014, insurers will be prohibited from discriminating against the 16,000 Whittier residents under 65 with a pre-existing health condition; 57,000 Whittier residents with private insurance coverage will no longer face annual limits on coverage, and 13,000 Whittier residents who now lack health insurance will have access to coverage for the first time. Every resident who purchases their health insurance on the private market will be able to shop for health insurance in transparent and competitive marketplaces called exchanges, where insurers will be required to publish the prices and benefits of their policies in simple, plain language.