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Contact: (573) 751-1186

Senator Cunningham's "Health Care Freedom Act" Passed by Missouri Senate

JEFFERSON CITY—A hard-fought victory for individual choice in health care was earned today after the Senate passed the "Health Care Freedom Act," a measure sponsored by Sen. Jane Cunningham (R-Chesterfield) in response to the recent passage of the federal health care bill.

The act was attached to a comprehensive insurance bill, [House Bill 1764](#), and prohibits any federal law from interfering with an individual's health care freedom—if approved by Missouri voters. According to the bill, the Health Care Freedom Act will be placed before voters on the August 2010 ballot, and if approved, no federal law could force a patient, employer, or health care provider to participate in any government or privately run health care system.

"This legislation simply protects the rights of Missourians to choose their own health care products and services without fear of facing fines or imprisonment," Sen. Cunningham said. "It doesn't reject any federal health care option, nor take away an individual's choice to participate in the federal health care plan. The measure expands options, not limits them. I'm proud to lead Missouri's push-back on this intrusive, costly mandate from Washington, D.C, and eager for Missourians' voices, which have for so long been denied, to finally be heard at the voting booth."

Senator Cunningham also says that the bill will protect small businesses from burdensome requirements.

"In this economy, we cannot push ineffective, wildly expensive mandates on our businesses and then expect economic growth," Sen. Cunningham said. "This unprecedented order from the government placed upon individuals and businesses to buy certain products and services must be stopped."

After passing the Senate by a vote of 26-8, HB 1764 now moves back to the House for final approval. Due to the referendum found in the measure, final approval by the House would send the legislation to the Secretary of State.

The Health Care Freedom Act has 20 Senate co-sponsors and is being emulated in 42 other states.

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SENATOR JANE CUNNINGHAM
7TH SENATE DISTRICT
CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 225
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101



OFFICE:
(573) 751-1186
WWW.SENATE.MO.GOV/CUNNINGHAM