

For Immediate Release

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New Report: Kennedy HELP Bill Makes Good Health Care More Affordable Than Senate Finance Bill, Typical Nebraska Family To Spend \$2,419 Less If Senate Passes HELP Committee Legislation

Read the report online here: <http://neappleseed.org/healthcare/>

Lincoln, NE - According to a new report released today by Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest as part of Health Care for America Now (HCAN) - the nation's largest health care campaign - Senator Kennedy's HELP Bill is \$2,419 more affordable than the Senate Finance Bill for Nebraska's families and businesses.

A typical American family of four earning \$55,100 a year - roughly the national median income - would pay \$3,900 less in premiums and out-of-pocket costs under the HELP bill.

A typical Nebraska family of three earning \$60,491 a year - the state median income - would pay \$2,419 less in premiums and out-of-pocket costs under the HELP bill.

The HELP bill builds on employer-based coverage, protecting the 57.4% of Nebraskans who get their health coverage through work, but under the Finance bill, employers are not required to offer or help pay for coverage at all.

"This report finds that the tax credits under the Senate HELP bill are better for Nebraska families and will provide Nebraskans with more affordable health care," said Rebecca Gould, Executive Director of Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest. "As the Senate merges the Senate Finance and HELP Committee bills, we urge our Senators to support the provisions in the HELP Committee bill that ensure Nebraska families can get a guarantee of good coverage at work or be able to truly afford coverage if they need to buy it on their own."

Other Findings and Provisions:

- HELP sets Medicaid eligibility at or below 150 percent of federal poverty. Finance sets eligibility at or below 133 percent.

- HELP offers people in the health insurance exchange the choice of a public health insurance option which will lower premiums and force private insurance companies to compete. Finance does not.
- Finance raises revenue through a 40% tax on health plans, a tax that will get passed through from insurers to employers to employees and make health care less affordable for working families.
- "The HELP bill also pays for health reform through shared responsibility without putting an unfair burden on those who are already struggling," said Gould. "The Finance bill does not share the burden as fairly and we would hope the Senate would adopt the HELP financing provisions."

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Nebraska Appleseed, a nonprofit, nonpartisan public interest law project, is a national leader in addressing social problems facing vulnerable children without loving and permanent homes, low-income families working hard to make ends meet, and new immigrants seeking a better life. Nebraska Appleseed's current year action plan and description of its six program areas, significant litigation and policy reform successes, and broad-based accomplishments can be found at [neappleseed.org](http://neappleseed.org).

Nebraska Appleseed is a part of the Appleseed network of independent state-based public interest law centers working to identify and address social injustices. The Appleseed network seeks to build a just society through education, legal advocacy, community activism and policy expertise by addressing root causes and producing practical, systemic solutions with broad implication. For more information visit [appleseednetwork.org](http://appleseednetwork.org).

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