

Realtors[®] Fight For Affordable Health Insurance
Ron Wright, Chairman of Government Affairs – North

Because Realtors[®] are self-employed businessmen, finding affordable health care can be a real challenge. While many of our members have insurance through a spouse or other jobs, RWSSC estimates that more than 3300 of our members are currently without any health care insurance. Of course, this is a disaster just waiting to happen.

Realtors[®] are lobbying Congress to pass a law which will allow business associations, like the Realtor[®] Association, to join together to lower the cost of health care for their members. The Small Business Health Fairness (SBHF) Act (H.R. 525/S.406) would allow small businesses and self-employed workers to band together through a trade or professional association to negotiate lower health insurance cost for participants. Operating under the same rules as federally regulated large corporations and union plans which group participants regardless of where they live.

“The SBHF would give Realtors[®] a chance to negotiate for better rates and more uniform coverage,” said RWSSC President Chris Read. “While we estimate that 3300 members of RWSSC have no health insurance, the number of Realtors[®] nationwide without insurance is just staggering”.

Legislation was introduced earlier this year and is currently moving through the committees in the House and Senate. The House bill is moving forward to a vote on the floor, and is expected to pass. The Senate bill has been held up in Committee and faces opposition from Blue Cross/Blue Shield and other small group providers.

YOU CAN HELP! Sign up for NARs action center (www.naractioncenter.com) so that you can make your voice heard at the right time, to the right people. NAR will then send you a “Call to Action” when a bill is nearing a critical point in the process. You click the hyperlink and a letter is generated from you to your Congressman or Senator for your review. Click Send and the letter is automatically emailed for you. “Believe me, Congressmen count how many letters or email they get on a particular issue,” said Jeff Merrinette, lobbyist for RWSSC. “And when they get 1000 emails from Realtors[®] who live in their district, they pay attention to the message.”

Congresswoman Judy Biggert, Congressman Henry Hyde, and Congressman Jerry Weller have already co-sponsored H.R. 525. Neither Senator Barack Obama or Senator Dick Durbin have co-sponsored S. 406. President Bush pledged his strong support for the small business health plan bill in his speech at the Realtors[®] Midyear Legislative Meeting in May. The President also mentioned his support in his State of the Union address in January.

Your RPAC contributions help bring this message to your legislators and lends support to Congressmen who understand how important health care is to Realtors[®]. Please support

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