



NEWS RELEASE

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State Issues Report on Health Insurance *Focus is on the commercial health insurance market*

Salem, Oregon — The Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) today released a draft report examining the financial performance of Oregon's commercial health insurance providers.

"Health care affordability and availability continues to be a key concern for policymakers throughout Oregon," said Cory Streisinger, director of DCBS. "This report provides information on one aspect of the health care system – insurance – to assist in that discussion and help policymakers develop solutions that will benefit health care consumers."

The draft report, entitled "Health Insurance in Oregon," includes a summary of Oregon's health insurance regulation system, data on the health insurance market as a whole, financial profiles of Oregon's eight largest insurers, and an overview of cost-control initiatives. It also offers seven recommendations to improve the affordability and effectiveness of the commercial health insurance market. It is available to view on the DCBS Web site at http://www.cbs.state.or.us/external/ins/health_report/health-report_intro.html.

The report presents information collected pursuant to SB 501, signed into law in 2005, which requires health insurers to provide more data about their finances to the public. "With the additional information insurers provide under SB 501, we can present a more detailed picture of the financial performance of these insurers," said Joel Ario, administrator of the DCBS Insurance Division.

Governor Kulongoski has made health care accessibility and affordability one of his top priorities for the 2007 legislative session, including requiring more transparency from insurance companies and providers about health care costs and quality and providing reasonably priced insurance options to all uninsured children under the age of 19.

"Oregon consumers and businesses want better transparency in how our health care dollars are being spent," Governor Kulongoski said. "With the key financial information about health insurers provided by this report, we will be able to move forward in providing better access and affordability across the state."

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The report's Executive Summary is attached.

The Insurance Division, part of the Department of Consumer & Business Services, helps ensure the financial soundness of insurers, the fair treatment of consumers, and the affordability and availability of insurance products. For more information, go to www.insurance.oregon.gov.

The Department of Consumer and Business Services is Oregon's largest business regulatory and consumer protection agency. For more information, visit www.dcbs.oregon.gov.