

House Energy and Commerce Committee Approves Murphy's Amendment to Make Women's Health a Priority in Health Care Reform

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September 23, 2009

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - As the House Energy and Commerce Committee considers sweeping health care reform legislation, Congressman Chris Murphy (CT-5) secured passage of an amendment to make women's health issues a priority at the federal level by codifying offices of women's health into law. Murphy's amendment, which he offered with Rep. Tammy Baldwin (WI-2), builds on his record at the state level, where as Chairman of the Public Health Committee, he fought to fully fund breast and cervical cancer screening at Connecticut hospitals.

"President Obama's administration is providing more leadership on women's health than we have seen for the last eight years. And we have an opportunity, in this health reform effort, to work with him to ensure that volumes of research and information on women's health don't disappear simply because we didn't protect it," said Murphy.

Murphy introduced legislation this summer, the Women's Health Office Act, with Rep. Carolyn Maloney (NY-14) and Baldwin to close the gaps in research, policy, programs, education and training related to women's health care by providing permanent authorization to the offices of women's health in five federal agencies. Murphy offered the bill as an amendment to the health care bill in the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

Currently, the offices of women's health at the National Institutes of Health and a position at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration are the only two federally authorized and protected by law. The five other offices of women's health, in the Department of Health and Human Services, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration, currently lack this protection.

By giving greater security to the federal offices of women's health, Murphy's amendment ensures that these offices can

continue to provide vital leadership on women's health needs.

And women across the country utilize the resources of these offices. For example, the pamphlets produced by Food and Drug Administration's Office of Women's Health are the most requested of any documents at the government printing facility in Colorado. Last year, more than 5.6 million pamphlets were distributed to women across the country.

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