



# THE BECERRA BULLETIN

News and Views from Washington to Los Angeles



August 6, 2009, WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a continued effort to bring news and relevant information about our federal government back to his home district in Los Angeles, Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and senior member of the Ways and Means Committee, brings you “The Becerra Bulletin,” an e-newsletter filled with facts and information meant to stimulate thought and discussion about American economic policy and a host of other issues.

## BY THE NUMBERS

### SMALL BUSINESSES STAND TO BENEFIT FROM HEALTH CARE REFORM

Small businesses, which form the backbone of the U.S. economy, are fast becoming one of the primary victims of the health care crisis. Less than half of America’s small businesses can afford to offer health care benefits to their employees, while over half of America’s uninsured are small business owners, workers, and their families. The current employer-based health care system makes it relatively easier for businesses with many employees to purchase insurance, putting small businesses at a disadvantage when hiring and attempting to retain workers. The prohibitive cost of most health insurance plans on the individual market makes it nearly impossible for many small business owners to cover themselves and their families, let alone their employees. Once signed into law, America’s Affordable Health Choices Act will bring affordable large group rates, stable year to year pricing, lower administrative costs and greater choice of plans for America’s small businesses. With these needed reforms small business owners can do what they do best—innovate and grow the economy—without worrying about if and how to provide health coverage to their employees. Here are some key numbers that show why reform is needed for America’s small businesses:

#### WHY SMALL BUSINESS NEED HEALTH REFORM

- Small business able to offer insurance: **45%**
- Small business owners & employees without insurance: **28 million**
- Percentage of uninsured who own or work for a small business: **60%**
- Increase cost of premiums for small business since 2000: **129%**

#### HOW SMALL BUSINESSES WILL BENEFIT

- ✓ Affordable large group rates
- ✓ Stable pricing from year to year
- ✓ Lower administrative costs
- ✓ Choice of plans for employees
- ✓ Tax credit to pay for coverage

## SHORT TAKES — WASHINGTON, D.C.

### REP. BECERRA’S JAPANESE LATIN AMERICAN COMMISSION BILL RECEIVES BIPARTISAN, FAVORABLE SUBCOMMITTEE VOTE

A little known fact: during World War II, approximately 2,300 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry were forcibly deported from 13 Latin American countries to the United States and placed in an internment camp in Crystal City, Texas. Between 1941 and 1945, our government orchestrated and financed the forced transfer of these Japanese Latin American internees to use them as hostages in exchange for Americans held by Japan. In an effort to better understand this part of our history Rep. Becerra introduced H.R. 42, the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Latin Americans of Japanese Descent Act. On July 24th Rep. Becerra’s bill gained ground as a bipartisan majority of members of the House Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, Refugees, Border Security, and International Law voted to favorably report the bill to the House Judiciary Committee. If signed into law, Rep. Becerra’s legislation would create a commission to investigate the U.S. government’s involvement in the abduction, internment, and deportation of Japanese Latin Americans during World War II, and make recommendations for any appropriate remedies to Congress based on their findings. “Today’s favorable bipartisan subcommittee vote marks an important step forward for the cause of justice for Japanese Latin Americans who were relocated, deported and interned by the United States during World War II,” said Rep. Becerra. The bill will now be considered by the full House Judiciary Committee before being sent to the floor of the House for a vote.

### REPS. BECERRA, RYAN INTRODUCE BROWNFIELDS BILL TO BOOST URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN-UP

On July 20th, Rep. Becerra introduced the Brownfields Remediation Permanent Tax Incentive Act in the House of Representatives. The legislation makes permanent a tax incentive for private companies that take on the task of cleaning up “brownfields,” or plots of contaminated land often found in urban landscapes that require extensive environmental remediation before they can be developed. “At a time when urban landscapes throughout America need revitalization, it makes sense to provide incentives for companies to invest in cleaning up and redeveloping neglected brownfield sites,” Rep. Becerra said. Such remediation efforts can bring diverse benefits to surrounding communities. In addition to reducing exposure to hazardous substances, they can create jobs through new construction projects, grow local tax bases, and help revitalize neighborhoods whose economic development efforts are weighed down by abandoned structures and housing blight. Brownfield remediation is also environmentally sound in that it encourages developers to use existing developed land rather than starting new construction on undeveloped land or farmland.

**Representative Xavier Becerra, 31st Congressional District, California**

**Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus**

Committee on Ways and Means

Subcommittee on Oversight, Subcommittee on Health & Subcommittee on Social Security

Committee on Budget

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