

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today the House Ways and Means Committee voted to pass the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Tax Act](#) (H.R. 598). The legislation will now be combined with other elements of the recovery package passed by other House Committees, into H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for consideration by the full House of Representatives next week. Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), Vice Chair of the House Democratic Caucus and longstanding member of the committee, voted for the bill.

“Today we made important progress toward delivering a robust economic recovery package to America’s working families and distressed communities,” Rep. Becerra said. “It was made clear in today’s session that we will provide significant relief to America’s cash-strapped working families in the form of tax cuts, extended unemployment benefits, and subsidies to pay for health coverage, among other measures.

“I am particularly pleased that we are making a major investment in health information technology through Medicaid and Medicare that will modernize our healthcare system and lead to fewer errors and significantly reduce and control costs for patients and taxpayers.”

As passed by the committee, H.R. 598 will provide critical tax relief to working families and assistance with healthcare costs as well as extended and enhanced unemployment benefits for those who have lost their jobs during the economic downturn.

The legislation would also provide payment incentives to encourage the widespread adoption of Health Information Technology (HIT) and establish standards for interoperability and privacy. The investment in HIT is a critical step toward modernizing American healthcare, cutting red tape, eliminating redundant care and reducing health insurance premiums for millions.

Finally, the bill would provide temporary subsidies to help families who have lost their jobs maintain their healthcare coverage through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

The plan would also give businesses, large and small, tax incentives to invest in plants and

equipment and expand to hire new workers, helping to strengthen our economy and create new jobs. In particular, the plan would help create new, green jobs by making a critical investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

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