

Today, rapidly rising health care costs are straining the budgets of families nationwide. Congressman Altmire has always believed that no one should have to decide between paying their mortgage or their monthly health care premiums. That is why he has consistently worked to put in place policies that will lower health care costs for America's families and small businesses.

During his first-term, Congressman Altmire helped write the law that eliminated the late-enrollment penalty on prescription drug coverage for low-income seniors. In 2009, he helped enact legislation that will provide quality, affordable health care coverage to 11 million American children. As we move forward, Congressman Altmire will continue to use his health care background and expertise to improve the delivery of health care in our country.

Guiding Principles for Health Care Reform

During negotiations on health care reform, Congressman Altmire consistently advocated for commonsense reforms that would bring down costs for everyone, while preserving what works in our current health care system. Congressman Altmire ultimately voted against the final health care reform bill because it failed to implement the delivery system reforms necessary to rein in health care costs over the long-term. To read Congressman Altmire's statement regarding this vote, please click [here](#).

Championing the Repeal of the 1099 Provision in the Health Care Reform Law

Congressman Altmire is a cosponsor of the Small Business Paperwork Mandate Elimination Act which repeals the 1099 provision in the health care reform law. The Act eliminates the requirement that small businesses file a 1099 tax form for every business from which they have purchased more than \$600 in goods and services in a single year. The 1099 provision is a burden on small businesses and its repeal will allow them to focus on growing and creating jobs, instead of filling out unnecessary paperwork. For more information, see: [[Altmire Votes to Repeal 1099 Reporting Requirements for Small Businesses](#)

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Improving the Quality of Patient Care

On March 30, 2009, Congressman Altmire introduced the Quality FIRST Act (H.R. 1776) to reward hospitals for the quality of care provided to patients. The bill would implement a Medicare value-based purchasing program for hospitals – an approach that has been recommended by the Institute of Medicine and the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC). A 250-hospital demonstration project showed significant improvements in patient care and, if implemented nationally, the program could prevent 70,000 deaths per year. For more information, see: [[Altmire Introduces Key Health Care Reform Legislation](#)].

Protecting Medical Innovation

In January 2011, Congressman Altmire helped introduce the Protect Medical Innovation Act. The bipartisan piece of legislation would immediately repeal the medical device tax that was passed last year as part of the new health care law. The health care reform law places a high tax burden on small medical device businesses in western Pennsylvania, an industry that is key to the economic growth of our region. This bill to repeal the damaging tax has received bipartisan support with over 204 cosponsors.

Protecting Seniors Access to Medical Equipment and Supplies

Congressman Altmire worked to ensure the highly flawed durable medical equipment (DME) competitive bidding program will not limit seniors' access to the medical suppliers who can best meet their needs. He chaired a hearing on October 31, 2008, to examine the program and its potential impact on small businesses, led letters to the Small Business Administration and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and ultimately called for the program to be delayed. As part of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (H.R. 6331), he was successful in including an 18-month delay of the program at no additional cost to taxpayers. For more information, see: [[Altmire Votes to Override President's Veto of Medicare Bill](#)].

Strengthening Medicare, Prescription Drug Coverage

Enacted on July 15, 2008, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (H.R. 6331) prevents a scheduled 10 percent payment reduction for physicians, enhances preventive and mental health benefits, and improves programs for low-income beneficiaries. It also includes a provision authored by Congressman Altmire that provides relief to millions of Medicare beneficiaries who would otherwise be penalized for not signing up for prescription drug coverage during their enrollment period. As a result of Congressman Altmire's efforts, a barrier to coverage, known as the late enrollment penalty, will be permanently waived for those who can least afford it. For more information, see: [[Altmire Votes to Override President's Veto of Medicare Bill](#)].

Providing 11 Million Children with Quality Health Insurance

To help Pennsylvania's children obtain the health insurance they need and deserve, Congressman Altmire voted for the State Children Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) Reauthorization Bill (H.R. 2). This legislation -- which was signed into law on February 4, 2009 -- will provide quality health care coverage to 11 million children nationwide. This legislation is fully paid for and will add nothing to the national debt. For more information, see: [[Altmire: Bill Providing Health Care Coverage for Millions of Children Becomes Law Today](#)].