

November 7, 2009

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) -- U.S. Congressman Jason Altmire (PA-04) tonight released the following statement after voting against the health care reform legislation (H.R. 3962) debated today in the House. Please note that last week, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that under the terms of H.R. 3962, both federal and overall health care expenditures would actually increase in the long-term compared to current law.

“As I said following the initial committee vote in July, I voted against the House’s health care reform bill in the Education and Labor Committee because it failed to effectively rein in rising health care costs; it was punitive toward small businesses; and it paid for reform by raising taxes, rather than by squeezing the inefficiencies out of and modernizing our health care system.

“After months of negotiation, I believe that the bill we voted on today contained some improvements in each of these three areas, although these improvements were not sufficient for me to be able to vote for the bill. In particular, I remain concerned that the House’s health care reform bill still fails to make our health care system more cost-efficient. Until we rein in skyrocketing health care costs, we will simply be perpetuating an inefficient system that is unsustainable over time.”

“This bill is inadequate in two key areas that are critical to meaningful health care reform: cost containment and delivery system reform.□ Although I was unable to support this particular bill, I strongly believe that we need common-sense health care reform.□ I will continue working with my colleagues in the House and the Senate to create a bill that will preserve what works in our current system, reduce health care costs for American families and small businesses, and build a payment structure that better incentivizes efficiency, value and quality of care.”