

SPEAKER FABIAN NUÑEZ
46TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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California Assembly Passes Most Significant State Expansion of Health Care Coverage in Nation's History

Most Californians, Including All Children, Covered Under the Plan

SACRAMENTO - Historic health care legislation extending coverage to millions of California's uninsured, including all children, was approved by the state Assembly today by a 46-31 vote.

"We've crafted an amazing and historic bill that expands health coverage for those without it and improves health insurance for those already covered," Speaker Núñez said. "This brings us one step closer to making health care a right afforded to everybody in this state, and not just a privilege afforded to those with deep pockets."

Assembly Bill 1X1 is the culmination of nearly a year of negotiations between legislative leaders, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, and the state's leading labor, business, health care, and consumer groups. Dozens of organizations have embraced the bill, including the Service Employees International Union, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AARP, California Hospital Association, Safeway, March of Dimes, Children Now, Mental Health Association of California, American Nurses Association of California, California Association of Nurse Practitioners, Kaiser Permanente, CIGNA, Blue Shield, and Small Business California.

"No child in this state should be left without adequate health care coverage, and under this proposal, all 800,000 children will be covered," Speaker Núñez added.

Audio of the Speaker's opening and closing remarks is below.

AB 1X1 incorporates ideas from a number of stakeholders. It relies on a system of shared responsibility between employers, health care providers, consumers, and government agencies. It requires an individual mandate for most Californians, but provides subsidies for Californians earning up to 400% of the federal poverty line. The bill includes significant cost-containment and transparency language, including a requirement that insurance companies spend no more than 15 cents of every dollar on administrative costs. Those with pre-existing conditions are guaranteed coverage under the plan, and all children will be covered.

It is financed through a combination of fees and taxes to be approved by the voters in a November 2008 ballot initiative that will include a tobacco tax, employer fee assessed along a sliding scale based on annual payroll, a hospital fee, and a county share of cost.

It now heads to the California State Senate for consideration.

Here are links to audio of Speaker Fabian Núñez (D-Los Angeles) on the Assembly floor and at the press conference that followed, regarding Assembly Bill 1X1, the historic comprehensive health care bill supported by Assembly Democrats, Governor Schwarzenegger, and a diverse coalition of labor, business, health care, and consumer groups.

[Speaker Fabian Núñez says this is an historic day for California.](#)

[Speaker Fabian Núñez says the battle for health care reform is not over yet.](#)

[Speaker Fabian Núñez says Californians will be asked next year to approve the financing plan for the health care reform package.](#)

[Speaker Fabian Núñez makes a statement at the late afternoon news conference in the Capitol rotunda with the Governor. \(approximately 5 minutes\)](#)

[Speaker Fabian Núñez opening floor statement. \(approximately 10 minutes\)](#)

[Speaker Fabian Núñez closing floor statement. \(approximately 10 minutes\)](#)

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