

CT Health Care Reform Advisory Board

Business & Exchange Subcommittee

Minutes of January 5, 2010 Meeting

Members Present: Rick Willard (Chair), Leadership Council of the National Federation of Independent Businesses; Deputy Commissioner Cristine Vogel, Department of Public Health (DPH); Sue Peters, Aetna; Robert Dakers, Office of Policy and Management (OPM).

Rick Willard began the meeting at 8:35 am. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss different options of the “Health Insurance Exchange model”, the small group market and ideas for interim recommendations.

Comments:

- In the House and Senate bills, health insurance Exchanges begin to function in 2013 and 2014 respectively, allowing some time to provide feedback.
- There is a sense at this point that the Senate bill will prevail.
- It is likely that whatever becomes law regarding Exchanges will be fairly prescriptive. The model may also look a lot like the Massachusetts Connector.
- The National Health Policy Forum at George Washington University has published a good briefing on Exchanges entitled: *A Health Insurance Exchange: Prototypes and Design Issues* – http://www.nhpf.org/library/issue-briefs/IB832_HealthExchange_06-05-09.pdf.
- Deputy Commissioner Cristine Vogel and Bob Dakers will be attending: *A National Conference on Health Care Reform in Massachusetts: How to Organize Exchanges & Other Lessons Learned* on January 21 and 22. Designed for state officials, the conference will provide an opportunity to learn about and discuss the implementation of Exchanges with state leaders from across the country.
- Cristine Vogel noted that if a federal health care reform bill passes close to the February 1st deadline for the Advisory Board’s interim report, she may seek an extension to give the group time to respond.

Information needed:

- Baseline data on businesses and health insurance in CT. For example, in CT, 97.4 percent of businesses with over 50 employees provide health insurance as do 51.3 percent of businesses with 50 or less employees.
- Data on the size of the health insurance market in CT.
- Information about the CT MEHIP (Municipal Employees Health Insurance Plan) administered by the State Comptroller.
- Analysis of the Massachusetts Connector responsibilities and experience.
- A list of House and Senate bill requirements regarding Exchanges, state Medicaid programs and state insurance regulation.

- Analysis of impact of health care reform on the State Medicaid program.
- Comparison of mandated insurance benefits in CT and benefit levels proposed in the House and Senate bills.
- Information on the potential impact of the federal bills on small business. Rick Willard will look into engaging a speaker to address this issue for an Advisory Board meeting in February.

Ideas for Interim Recommendations:

- Consider how CT could participate in the federal rule making process once a federal health care reform bill is passed.
- Consider interstate purchase of insurance. Need to understand individual state regulations and determine which state has the overriding authority for regulating insurance. It is possible that the National Associate of Insurance Commissioners (NIAC) may provide guidelines.
- Look at existing Exchange models in CT (i.e. MEHIP, CBIA) and consider whether there is the potential to expand something that is working well or should a new mechanism be developed.
- Consider recommendations for an Exchange governance structure. Questions may include: Should there be a governance structure? Should it negotiate premiums? Should it have the authority to change basic benefits?
- Consider the need for database development to support an Exchange.
- Consider recommendations regarding existing state insurance benefit mandates.
- Consider how to enforce an individual mandate at the state level (i.e. with drivers' licenses, student loans).
- Consider if there are any state laws to propose in the 2010 CT legislative session that would facilitate implementation of health care reform.

Preparation for the next Business & Exchange Subcommittee:

- Bob Dakers will develop a list of House and Senate bill requirements for the Exchange and identify decisions that will need to be made on the state level.
- Cristine Vogel will explore whether there are any advance materials for the *National Conference on Health Care Reform in Massachusetts* that would help the subcommittee with its work.
- Cristine Vogel will get information about models for Exchanges in other states. Phil Vogel from CBIA was suggested as a possible source for this information.
- Cristine Vogel will ask Mark Schaefer about the potential impact of health care reform on the State Medicaid program and will ask Tom Woodruff for information on the MEHIP.
- Cristine Vogel will share the briefing on Exchanges entitled: *A Health Insurance Exchange: Prototypes and Design Issues* with Advisory Board members.
- Sue Peters will draft guiding principles and provide information on individual mandate enforcement.

Next meetings:

Business & Exchange Subcommittee

Wednesday, January 13, 2010, 9:00 – 10:30 am, Office of Health Care Access

Agenda: Guiding principles, governance structure and individual mandate

Tuesday, January 26, 2010, 8:30 – 10:00 am

Agenda: Insurance Exchange

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Tuesday, January 26, 2010, 10:00 – 12:00 am (rescheduled from January 21)

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.