

_HARKIN: NEW KAISER REPORT SHOWS HEALTH CARE PREMIUMS UP 131 PERCENT IN THE PAST 10 YEARS

The average premium in 2009 costs \$13,375 for family coverage, up 131 percent since 1999

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, commented on a new report out today which shows the cost of health insurance spiraling upwards over the past ten years, increasing at more than three times the rate of worker wages and four times the rate of inflation. The report also shows that the percent of employers offering health benefits in 2009 has decreased. The 2009 Kaiser-HRET Employer Health Benefits Survey is an in-depth look at trends in health insurance costs and coverage in the workplace and is widely cited for its comprehensive data about changes in employer-sponsored health coverage.

“This survey underscores yet again why the status quo is unsustainable,” **Senator Harkin said today.** “An average monthly premium for family coverage costing upwards of \$1,000 is just the latest indication of why the time to reform our broken health care system is long overdue. The American people deserve better, and I believe the Senate will soon approve legislation to provide comprehensive, affordable health coverage to all Americans.”

Among other findings, the report showed:

- Average premiums in 2009
 - \$13,375 for family coverage, up 131 percent since 1999
 - \$4,824 for single coverage
- Percent of employers offering benefits in 2009 at 60%, down from 63% in 2008
 - Firms 3-9 workers – 46 percent
 - Firms 10-24 workers – 72 percent
 - Firms 25-49 workers – 87 percent
 - Firms 50+ workers – 95 percent
- 29 percent of large firms (200+) offer retiree health benefits.

Click here to see the full report: <http://www.kff.org/>