



NEWS FROM:

SENATOR JOSEPH J. CRISCO, JR.

Deputy Caucus Leader & Federal Relations Liaison

REPRESENTING THE 17TH SENATORIAL DISTRICT

Chair: Insurance & Real Estate; Internship

Vice-Chair: Banks; Commerce

Member: Legislative Management

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 12, 2010

Contact: Laurence Grotheer
860-240-8820

SEN. CRISCO, REP. FONTANA SAY STATE'S INSURANCE CHOICE COULD LEAVE MOST VULNERABLE RESIDENTS EVEN MORE SO

Hartford – **State Senator Joseph J. Crisco, Jr.** (D-Woodbridge) and **state Representative Steve Fontana** (D-North Haven), co-chairs of the legislature's Insurance and Real Estate Committee, today expressed their growing concern about the risk of prolonged indecision regarding insurance coverage for Connecticut's most vulnerable residents.

The lawmakers want the Executive Branch, which has autonomy in this matter, to make a prompt decision about whether or not to use federal funds to provide coverage for high-risk patients with existing conditions or have them participate directly in the federal program, called the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP).

“We expected the state to qualify for a portion of a \$5 billion fund set up by the federal government – Connecticut was in line for \$50 million – but at the last minute, the Rell administration stepped on the brakes,” **Senator Crisco** said. “This is no time for indecision, when the identified pool of those to be covered is already at great risk and currently without any insurance coverage whatsoever.”

Published reports suggest the Rell administration postponed enrollment, which was to begin July 1, pending further analysis and a decision sometime after July 15th.

“Thousands of Connecticut residents with pre-existing conditions need access to health insurance coverage under this federal program,” **Rep. Fontana** said. “Bureaucratic delays and uncertainty only serve to frustrate them further and raise their level of anxiety. We should be able to work with our Health Reinsurance Association to figure out expeditiously whether to use the federal funding to start our own program, and if so, how best to do it.”

The lawmakers said Connecticut's application for the state-run version of PCIP was submitted in early June with the assumption enrollment was going to begin July 1. But contracts prepared by the federal Department of Health and Human Services remain unsigned.

###