

# DOZENS OF STATES SEEK TO KEEP HEALTH INSURANCE OPTIONAL

By Institute for Health Freedom

At least 30 State legislatures are seeking to keep health insurance optional, according to a legislative update from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). The language of the proposals varies from State to State, and 21 States are moving to put constitutional amendments on the ballot.


The NCSL notes that “Based on actions initially in Arizona, several States propose or may propose State constitutional amendments, using language such as: ‘To preserve the freedom of all residents of the State to provide for their own health care . . . A law or rule shall not compel, directly or indirectly, any person, employer or health care provider to participate in any health care system. . . .’” The report goes on to note that “Arizona voters are scheduled to cast ballots on this constitutional amendment next November [2010] that, if adopted by voters, could block future State health reforms and at least raise questions about some features within future Federal health reforms.”

According to the NCSL tracking, as of early February formal resolutions or bills had been filed in: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming. (For details about the legislation, see the NCSL’s tracking legislative update: <http://www.ncsl.org/?tabid=18906>.)

And just recently, the Virginia Senate handed defeat to mandatory health insurance. With five Democratic State senators breaking ranks with their party, the Virginia Senate approved legislation to prohibit mandatory health insurance. “Three identical bills to prohibit Virginians from being required to purchase health [insurance] were approved [Feb. 1] on 23-17 votes in the Virginia Senate, where Democrats have a 22-18 majority,” the Associated Press reported.

The bills are SB 283, 311, and 417. Bill SB 283 states: “No resident of this Commonwealth, regardless of whether he has or is eligible for health insurance coverage under any policy or program provided by or through his employer, or a plan sponsored by the Commonwealth or the federal government, shall be required to obtain or maintain a policy of individual insurance coverage. No provision of this title

shall render a resident of this Commonwealth liable for any penalty, assessment, fee, or fine as a result of his failure to procure or obtain health insurance coverage.”

The *Washington Post* reported that the bills were expected to be approved by the GOP-controlled House of Delegates and signed by Governor McDonnell. 

## SOURCES:

- National Conference of State Legislatures, “State Legislation Opposing Certain Health Reforms, 2009-2010,” (update as of February 10, 2010) at <http://www.ncsl.org/?tabid=18906>. “Va. Senate OKs Bill Against Health Reform Mandate,” by Dena Potter, Associated Press (AP), *BusinessWeek* (online edition), February 1, 2010: <http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D9DJJV500.htm>
- “Virginia Senate Bills Say No to Requiring Health Insurance,” by Rosalind S. Helderman, *Washington Post*, February 2, 2010: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/02/01/AR2010020103674.html?hpid=topnews>
- “Senate Bill NO. 283,” Virginia Legislative Database, January 28, 2010: <http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?101+ful+SB283E>

Courtesy of Institute for Health Freedom, *Health Freedom Watch*, February 2010.

[www.ForHealthFreedom.org](http://www.ForHealthFreedom.org)

## NHF BOARD OF GOVERNOR’S RESULTS

Thanks to all of you who voted in this last election for the NHF Board of Governors. The following were elected to the board in this order:

**Pamela Gerry, RN, CCT**  
**Harvey Bigelsen, M.D.**  
**Sherokee Ilse**  
**William Franklin McCoy, M.D., D.Ht**