

NEWS



Independent Insurance Agents of Virginia

Incorporated

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Independent Insurance Agents Express Disappointment in Anthem Pulling Out of Individual Health Market

Urges all parties to work together to help consumers.

RICHMOND, Va., August 14, 2017 — Upon the announcement that Anthem was pulling out of the individual insurance market in Virginia, the Independent Insurance Agents of Virginia urged industry and elected officials to set politics aside and meet sooner rather than later to figure out a way to help consumers with their health insurance/coverage needs. Stating that there is plenty of blame to go around, IIAV urged Governor McAuliffe and legislative leadership to convene a "health care summit" to set special interests aside and work together on solutions to the increasing costs of both health care AND insurance.

"Everyone needs to recognize that before the Affordable Care Act was passed, there were unsustainable increases in health insurance premiums. It wasn't passed just for the fun of it," stated Bob Bradshaw, President and CEO of the Independent Insurance Agents of Virginia. "Both Governors Kaine and McDonnell convened health care summits and Virginia was becoming a leader in controlling costs with innovative ideas. Let's again use the talents of business, industry, regulators and consumers to work together on this critical health care crisis."

For example, Virginia was perhaps one of the first states in the nation to allow children to stay on their parent's health plan until they were 26 - an idea incorporated to the ACA. Moreover, health insurance is directly reflective of the real exposure – the cost of health care. If costs aren't controlled, then the market will continue to be erratic.

"Despite what some insurers believe, insurance agents work to help consumers navigate through the health care maze which can be daunting," noted Doug Megill, IIAV Chairman with the McLean Insurance Agency. "Consumers and businesses -large and small- come to insurance agents with a wide range of insurance needs and we work to provide the coverage they need - and it's getting more and more difficult as insurers pull out of the market. We need to work together to create a sustainable insurance and health care marketplace in Virginia."

IIAV urged political leaders to set politics aside, recognize that a crisis exists and work together on solutions and stop pointing fingers.

"Simply put, you can't institute a take all system without a financial backstop which may incorporate reinsurance and then be surprised when the backstop is withheld and the marketplace collapses," stated Bradshaw. "Insurers have made it clear that they don't like the individual marketplace because it's too volatile. All consumers must recognize that we're all in this together and sending everyone to the hospital emergency room ultimately increases societal costs. Controlling costs is the real objective."

Founded in 1898, IIAV is part of the nation's oldest and largest association of independent insurance agents, representing a network of more than 300,000 agents and agency employees nationwide and over 4,000 in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Its members are insurance businesses that offer customers a choice of policies from a variety of insurance companies. Independent agents offer all lines of insurance – property, casualty, life, health, employee benefit plans and retirement products. Web address: www.iiav.com and nationally www.independentagent.com

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