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Paulsen, Blumenauer Introduce Bill to Improve Access to Primary Care

Washington, D.C. – Congressman Erik Paulsen (MN-03) and Congressman Earl Blumenauer (OR-03) have introduced the bipartisan *Primary Care Enhancement Act* to increase access to primary care physicians for patients and families.

The *Primary Care Enhancement Act* would provide patients with more flexibility in their health care options by giving them greater access to direct primary care, an innovative delivery model that offers integrated primary care service paid for by low monthly membership-based fees. Currently, patients have limited access to direct primary care, because it is considered a form of insurance coverage and not a medical service. By clarifying current tax and regulatory language, patients and their families will be able to utilize this model of high-quality health care with primary care physicians.

“Patients want health care to be patient-centered, accessible, and affordable, which is why direct primary care has become a popular option for many in Minnesota and across the country,” said Congressman Erik Paulsen. **“This bipartisan, commonsense fix will empower patients by improving access to high-quality direct primary care and providing them the flexibility to pursue the health care that best suits them.”**

“Direct primary care services improve access to health care, while promoting affordability,” said Congressman Earl Blumenauer. **“This legislation will give patients more options by allowing the flexibility for companies to offer these services and help their employees stay healthy and productive.”**

The *Primary Care Enhancement Act* has also been endorsed by American Academy of Family Physicians. Below is a statement from the organization’s president, Dr. Wanda Filer:

“Family physicians across the country applaud the introduction of the *Primary Care Enhancement Act of 2016*. This legislation will for the first time allow access to an innovative and increasingly popular form of primary care, for patients who have health savings accounts alongside their insurance coverage. By clarifying that direct primary care is a health care service and not a form of insurance, the bill removes a critical barrier to the continued growth of an innovative, patient-centered model of delivering high-quality primary care. The American Academy of Family Physicians fully supports giving all Americans access to direct primary care.”

The legislation would also empower consumers to use their Health Savings Account dollars to pay for the monthly membership fees. A companion bill was introduced in the U.S. Senate by Senator Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA) and Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA).

For complete text of the bill, [click here](#).

Congressman Paulsen, a champion of small business and advocate of free enterprise, entrepreneurship, and innovation, serves on the House Ways and Means Committee, the bicameral Joint Economic Committee, and is co-chair of the Congressional Medical Technology Caucus.

For more information on Congressman Paulsen's work in Congress visit paulsen.house.gov.

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Regards,

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