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Heinrich Introduces Bill To Help Military Families Extend Health Care Coverage To Their Children

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Representative Martin Heinrich (NM-1) has introduced H.R. 4923, the TRICARE Dependent Coverage Extension Act, a bill that would increase the maximum age to 26 at which our troops and military retirees are allowed to provide health coverage to their dependent children.

“Our brave men and women in uniform sacrifice so much for our country, and it is our duty to make sure that they have access to quality, affordable health care,” said Rep. Heinrich. “Because of the new health reform bill passed by Congress, Americans who receive health insurance through a group plan will soon be able to provide coverage to dependent children up to age 26—our military health coverage must meet that same standard and be nothing less.”

Rep. Heinrich introduced this legislation following the enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the sweeping health care overhaul that will allow all American citizens the opportunity to gain access to quality, affordable health care. Under the new system, individuals with private health insurance will now be able to provide coverage to their dependent children up to age 26.

TRICARE, the health insurance for military service members, retirees, and the families of both, is under the control of the U.S. Department of Defense and governed by a different section of the United States code, so it will not be affected in any way by the new health reform legislation. To provide our troops and military retirees with the same new benefits given to civilians, H.R. 4923 would amend Title 10 to change the maximum age of coverage for children from 23 to 26.

“Our military families stand behind our troops and lift them up, often making significant sacrifices like our service members themselves,” said Rep. Heinrich. “Allowing parents to provide health coverage to their dependent adult children is just one of the many small things we can do to show our military families how much we appreciate them and honor their service to our country.”

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