

Extension of Remarks
Representative Jan Schakowsky
H.R. 1213
May 3, 2011

Mr. Speaker,

I rise in opposition to H.R. 1213 which would eliminate funding for a key component of the Affordable Care Act's coverage expansion – the State-based health insurance Exchanges.

The Exchanges are the chief vehicle through which we will give millions of individuals and small businesses – currently locked out of the market – access to affordable coverage.

The Affordable Care Act provides each state with the flexibility to design its own exchange – tailored to meet the needs of its residents, strengthen the private insurance market, and provide consumer protections.

This bill repeals the funding for the exchanges and eliminates that flexibility.

Repeal would deny Illinois and every other state the funding needed to setup a unique state solution for improving and fixing broken insurance markets.

This bill undermines the work already being done in Illinois and, given the State budget situation, will likely mean Illinois would be unable to run its own State-based health insurance Exchange.

In September, Illinois received a \$1 million grant to begin planning and establishing its Exchange.

Without funding to move to implementation, we won't have the resources to get our exchange up and running and millions of Illinoisans will lose access to affordable, adequate health insurance coverage.