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## **Rep. Paulsen Introduces *Patients Freedom to Choose Act*** *Legislation to empower patients and encourage health care savings*

**Washington, D.C.** – Representative Erik Paulsen (MN-03) today introduced the *Patients Freedom to Choose Act* in the United States House of Representatives. This legislation would repeal two provisions of the recently passed health care reform bill that limit a patient’s choice in how they can use their consumer-directed health care plans.

Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) are innovative and popular consumer-directed health benefit plans that large and small businesses offer to their employees. Starting in 2011, the new health care law will prohibit individuals from using their HSA and FSA accounts to purchase over-the-counter medication without a prescription from their doctor. And, beginning in 2013, contributions to FSAs will be limited by a federal cap of \$2,500. The *Patients Freedom to Choose Act* would restore a patient’s ability to use their HSA and FSA accounts for over-the-counter drug purchases and keep the federal government from limiting their ability to save for health care costs.

“With health care costs at an all time high, Congress should be taking steps to empower patients, not limit their options,” said Rep. Paulsen. “Access to quality, affordable care is critical. Health Savings and Flexible Spending Accounts provide patients with a vehicle to save for medical expenses and offer them options in using their health care benefits. Limiting contributions and adding restrictions to the use of HSAs and FSAs is a great disservice to hardworking Americans.”

Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison of Texas, a long time advocate for preserving patient choice, has introduced companion legislation in the United States Senate.

“I am proud to introduce legislation that would repeal such a detrimental provision. Health care decisions should be in the hands of patients and doctors, not Washington bureaucrats,” said Paulsen.

Rep. Paulsen is co-chair of the House Medical Technology Caucus and a proponent of increasing access to technology to decrease health care costs and improve quality of care—ultimately leading to better outcomes for patients.

For more information on Rep. Paulsen’s work in Congress, please visit [www.paulsen.house.gov](http://www.paulsen.house.gov).

