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**“A Wallop of a Message”
Statement by OCPP’s Janet Bauer on
Estimate of Recession’s Hit on Health Insurance Coverage in Oregon**

A report released today estimating the impact of the recession on health insurance coverage in Oregon delivers a wallop of a message to Congress on the need for meaningful health reform legislation. Oregonians can wait no longer.

According to projections by Families USA in their report, *One-Two Punch: Unemployed and Uninsured*, among all states Oregon will have the largest percentage point increase in 2009 of working-age adults without health insurance due to rising unemployment.

OCPP reported in September that the latest U.S. Census Bureau data showed no significant increase in the share of Oregonians without health coverage in 2007-08 from 2005-06. But we warned that because the Census data did not include the recession’s most severe period in terms of job losses, the share of Oregonians currently without health coverage was likely higher.

How much higher is the subject of the Families USA report. It estimates that the share of Oregon’s working-age population who are uninsured could be as high as 25.1 percent in 2009, up 3.1 percent from 2006-2008. Families USA estimates that 84,200 working-age Oregonians will have lost their health insurance due to unemployment this year.

With the prospects of a “jobless recovery,” the end of the recession is unlikely to bring much cheer to the many Oregonians who have lost their work or their health coverage.

Congress should waste no time in enacting health reform legislation that ensures that everyone, the unemployed and those fortunate enough to have a job, has affordable coverage.