



Contact: Rich Templin  
Florida AFL-CIO  
Phone 850-224-6926  
Cell 850-566-4348

135 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Florida AFL-CIO

## Press Release

### **Statement by Florida AFL-CIO President Mike Williams on Saturday Night's Health Care Vote in the U.S. Senate – “An Historic Step But the Bill Needs Work.”**

Tallahassee - Saturday night's vote by the Senate to break a Republican filibuster and move forward with debate on health care reform is a critical and historic milestone in the march toward quality, affordable health care for America.

Senator Bill Nelson stood up for working families in Florida by voting to begin formal debate on a solution to the health care problems that torment our state's working people daily. Sadly, Senator George Lemieux showed that he was not even willing to let the debate over reform go forward.

Senators will now have the opportunity to come up with the best health care law for America. They have a long way to go but we are confident that, with the continued outpouring of popular support for real reform, they will finally be able to get the job done.

The Patient Protection and Affordable Health Care Act's strong cost cutting measures go further than any previous legislation. However, the bill must be improved in important areas. The employer responsibility provision should be expanded to cover all employers and any plan to tax working families' benefits should be eliminated. The American middle class has been victimized by stagnant wages for decades, largely because they have forgone pay increases to keep health care coverage for their families. To now turn around and tax them as a way to pay for reform is wrong and counterproductive for our economy.

We look forward to working with our senators and representatives to fulfill the promise of quality, affordable health care that our country deserves.

###