



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA**

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EDWARD G. RENDELL, Governor

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**GOVERNOR SAYS FINANCIAL ANALYSIS SHOWS NOTHING
STANDS IN WAY OF SENATE ACTION TO HELP
PENNSYLVANIA'S UNINSURED**

HARRISBURG – Governor Edward G. Rendell today urged the Senate to immediately enact Pennsylvania Access to Basic Care (PA ABC) for the uninsured now that an analysis shows the proposal is financially sound and stable.

“The financial analysis released today by the Governor’s Budget Office proves that we have the funds to do two things: help hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians by offering them access to affordable health insurance through PA ABC; and continue to help doctors pay their medical malpractice insurance,” the Governor said.

“The budget office did a thorough analysis that shows program costs and demonstrates to the taxpayers of Pennsylvania and their elected leaders that this is a financially responsible plan. With the additional revenues from the proposed 10-cents-per-pack increase in the cigarette tax and the first-time-ever tax on smokeless and other tobacco products, we will be able to fully fund this program.

“This analysis answers the argument from critics that the bill does not have adequate funding. We do. Now all we need is the political will to get this done.

“The uninsured do not have powerful Harrisburg lobbyists to represent them. They are hard-working individuals who are trying to make ends meet and worrying about how they are going to afford to see a doctor if they get sick. It’s time we do something for them to make their lives a little easier. That’s what public service is supposed to be about.

“This budget analysis is the final piece to the puzzle and, with it, I hope the Senate debates and takes action on this crucial program. The biggest holdup we have been hearing is, ‘How are you going to fund it?’ Well, this analysis answers that question. Now it’s time to take action and help the people of Pennsylvania.”

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The Rendell administration is committed to creating a first-rate public education system, protecting our most vulnerable citizens and continuing economic investment to support our communities and businesses. To find out more about Governor Rendell's initiatives and to sign up for his weekly newsletter, visit his Web site at: www.governor.state.pa.us.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A copy of Budget Secretary Michael J. Masch's letter describing the Governor's Budget Office analysis of Senate Bill 1137, which includes the PA ABC program, is available at the Governor's Office of Health Care Reform Web site at www.rxforpa.com. Select the link for "ABC Financial Analysis."