



STATE SENATOR
MICHAEL J. SKINDELL

23RD DISTRICT

*****Press Release*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Senator Skindell Calls for Creation of State Health Exchange

Legislation would establish the Ohio Health Benefit Exchange Agency

Columbus – Senator Michael J. Skindell (D-Lakewood) has introduced Senate Bill 277 to create the Ohio Health Benefit Exchange Agency, which will be responsible for operating the Ohio Health Benefit Exchange Program. The Federal Affordable Care Act requires all states to enact legislation that establishes a health exchange by January 1, 2013.

“The legislature can no longer sit and watch idly as the director of the Department of Insurance does nothing to establish the state’s health exchange,” said Senator Skindell. “This legislation is an opportunity for us to create a competitive marketplace for all Ohioans to purchase affordable health insurance from a variety of providers.”

The Exchange Program will allow individuals who otherwise are unable to afford or do not have access to obtain adequate health care coverage. The bill also develops the navigator program to assist and educate consumers. The qualifications of a premium tax credit will also be outlined, which alleviates the financial burden placed on individuals.

“Through this bill our state will see an expansion of coverage, a promotion of competition, affordable options, and overall improvements of consumer protection,” said Senator Skindell. “It is essential that we move forward with this legislation in a timely manner in order to comply with the Affordable Care Act passed by Congress.”

Additionally, a “SHOP Exchange” will be established as a small business health options program to provide options for small business owners and their employees. Businesses will have the option to benefit from the SHOP Exchange by selecting a qualified health insurance plan to meet the needs of their employees.