Governor Dayton's MNsure Appointees have Conflicts of Interest

(St. Paul/Minneapolis) Today, Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton released his list of seven appointees to the MNsure health insurance exchange governance board. Twila Brase, president and co-founder of Citizens' Council for Health Freedom provides the following statement in response:

"There are serious conflicts of interest represented on the MNsure board. Given its authority over health care choices, its access to private data on individuals, and its spending powers outside of legislative control, Minnesotans should be very concerned.

"One of the requirements in the law is that there be no conflicts of interest, such as employment by, on a board of, or representing the interests of any insurer, provider, hospital, insurance producer or any other entity selling items or services to or through the health insurance exchange.

"However, the board members are clearly biased toward health insurance companies, government health care, and acquisition and analysis of private patient data.

"Specifically, two of the members worked for the nation's largest health plan, UnitedHealth Group, and its data and finance subsidiaries (Aderinkomi and Beutner). One worked for a labor union, designed insurance benefits for state government workers, and sat on two boards of organizations that support the reporting of patient data to the government without patient consent (Benner). Two were part of the Minnesota Health Care Commission that led to the imposition of managed care plans across the state as well as government access to private medical records (Benner and Forsythe).

"One is a founding member of the Fond du Lac Insurance Board of Directors and is himself part of the Reservation bureaucracy (Norrgard). Only one is retired, but she worked at a medical center that was a joint venture with BlueCross BlueShield of Minnesota. And one is the commissioner of human services whose bias is clearly for the imposition of national health care reform in Minnesota, including empowering health plans and federal data collection through the Exchange (Jesson).

"Board members are clearly biased toward large insurance companies and in line with the federal takeover of health care through MNsure's imposition of managed care, data collection, and government control of health care. This conflict of interest with patients and patient privacy endangers the health and privacy rights of Minnesotans."

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For more information or to interview Twila Brase, contact Barbara Smith at 651-646-8935 (office).