

Grassley, Upton Seek HHS Answers on Questionable Grants for Health Care Exchanges

Written by Grassley Press

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Leaders Concerned With Reports of Taxpayer Dollars Paying for the Inclusion of Health Law Promotion in Network TV Shows

WASHINGTON – Sen. Chuck Grassley of Iowa and Rep. Fred Upton of Michigan today asked the Department of Health and Human Services to explain waste and what appears to be inadequate or non-existent oversight of the open-ended federal checks awarded to states to establish health care exchanges through the President’s health care law. More than \$1 billion has been awarded to date, and revelations of questionable expenses, such as a public relations contract in California to promote the health care exchanges on primetime network television shows, continue to surface.

Grassley and Upton expressed concern over an unlimited budget and little or no restrictions and accountability for federal dollars to help states establish health care exchanges under the new federal health care law, especially in light of looming mandatory budget cuts of \$1.2 trillion. News reports have detailed the state of California’s contract with a public relations firm to “tap major network TV shows like ‘Grey’s Anatomy’ and ‘Modern Family’ to sell Americans on the health care law.”

“HHS has failed to provide substantive guidance to states on how the money is to be used,” Grassley and Upton wrote in a letter to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. “Unsurprisingly given these facts, news reports have shown how states have engaged in questionable contracts with taxpayer dollars. ... Ensuring proper use of American taxpayer dollars is of the utmost importance, and we trust that you share our concerns.”

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Grassley is ranking member of the Judiciary Committee. Upton is chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

The text of their letter is available [here](#) .

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