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## Health costs hit West Virginians hard

By *Cecelia Mason*

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May 13, 2009 · Speaker Nancy Pelosi is promising the House will have a major health care bill on the floor by July, and the organization Families USA says reform is long over due.

The organization just released statistics showing health care costs place an increasing burden on West Virginians.

West Virginians are spending considerably more on health care than they did nine years ago according to a report released this week by **Families USA**.

Ron Pollack, Executive Director, said the number of West Virginians under age 65 spending more than 10 percent of their income on health care increased almost 50 percent since 2000. There was a similar increase for those spending more than 25 percent of their income on health care.

Pollock said four out of five of these people actually have health insurance coverage.

"As our findings made clear, high health care costs are not just the problem of the uninsured. More and more families with insurance are affected by rising health care costs and for many the burden of these costs is becoming too great to bear."

**West Virginians for Affordable Health Care** is a non profit organization concerned about the high cost of health care.

Renate Pore, President, said families in this state are especially hard hit because the median household income is about \$40,000 a year, and 10 percent of that is \$4,000.

"Now it doesn't take hardly anything for somebody to spend \$4,000 on health care," Pore said.

"Or at 25 percent it would be \$10,000, which anybody who has one or more chronic conditions or a catastrophic health care event will



Too Great a Burden is a report from Families USA on healthcare costs

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