

## Massachusetts healthcare proposal opposed by businesses.

In continuing coverage from the Aug. 12 edition of *NAHU Newswire*, Jacob Goldstein wrote in the [Wall Street Journal's](#) (8/12) Health Blog, "Massachusetts, looking for ways to pay for its universal health care plan, is pushing businesses to do more." Monday, the governor's office announced a plan that "would require most companies with more than 10 employees to pay at least 33 percent of full-time workers' premiums within the first 90 days of employment and cover at least 25 percent of their full-time workers with an employer plan." But, "[b]usinesses are pushing back." Goldstein predicted that "more businesses are likely to choose" to pay the \$295 penalty per employee for not meeting the guidelines "if the new, stricter rules go into effect." Goldstein added, "With politicians talking about reducing the rolls of the uninsured nationwide, Massachusetts provides a useful laboratory for the rest of the country to watch."

**Researchers say Massachusetts healthcare reform may prove unsuccessful.** [Medical News Today](#) (8/12) reported that "a group of Massachusetts-based researchers cautions that early declarations of...success may be premature" for the Massachusetts health reform of 2006. According to an article titled "State Health Reform Flatlines," published in the most recent issue of the *International Journal of Health Services*, researchers examined "seven state-based health reforms over the past two decades" that are similar to the Massachusetts health initiative. The seven reforms "were based on the expansion of private insurance coverage." Researchers found that "in each case, the plan had little impact on the state's number of uninsured persons and produced no sustained improvements in delivering care." According to David Himmelstein, study co-author, in Massachusetts, "the uninsurance rate has fallen by only 2 percent, from 7.7 percent to 5.8 percent, since the reform was passed, while the plan is already \$147 million over budget."