



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**August 3, 2006**

CONTACT: C. Chic Smith

301-443-1592 office / 202-689-4885 cell

Email: [csmith@ahrq.gov](mailto:csmith@ahrq.gov) / Web site: [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov)

**OKLAHOMA CITY WEIGHS IN ON INTERIM HEALTH CARE RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Final recommendations to be considered by Congress, White House*

**Washington, D.C.** – The Citizens' Health Care Working Group held a community meeting on August 1<sup>st</sup> in Oklahoma City, OK. More than three hundred attendees provided feedback on the Working Group's interim recommendations which offer ways to improve the nation's health care systems. The Oklahoma meeting was hosted by Integris Health, Care ATC, the Oklahoma Insurance Department, AARP, and The State Chamber of Commerce.

Catherine McLaughlin, Director of the University of Michigan's Economic Research Initiative on the Uninsured, and a member of the Citizens' Health Care Working Group who attended the meeting stated, "It was great to hear from this diverse group of Oklahomans, many of whom expressed strong opinions about what needs to be done. Throughout, there was a sense of community and the need to work together to achieve a shared goal of a better system."

"This has been an historic event for Oklahoma," said Insurance Commissioner Kim Holland. "Never before have Oklahomans gathered in such numbers to voice their concerns and desires for the future of health care in our state and in our nation."

The Working Group's interim recommendations released on June 2<sup>nd</sup> reflect input from over 20,000 citizens who participated in more than seventy five community meetings nationwide or provided their input online. The public has until August 31<sup>st</sup> to submit comments. Comments may be submitted online at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov) or by mail addressed to the Citizens' Health Care Working Group, Attn: Interim Recommendations, 7201 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 575, Bethesda, MD 20814. The comments received will help the Working Group frame a set of final recommendations that will be submitted to the President and Congress in September.

**About the Citizens' Health Care Working Group**

The Citizens' Health Care Working Group is a nonpartisan, independent body whose members were tasked with engaging the public in a nationwide discussion of the nation's health care system and charged with developing recommendations for the President and Congress to provide U.S. citizens with "Health Care that Works for All Americans."

###