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**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Interview on radio or TV:

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ABC for Health: AB 878 and the Close of the 2009 Legislative Session

Madison, WI – “This does not end here,” said Bobby Peterson, public interest attorney and director of ABC for Health, “The insurance industry cronies and their legislative allies expose just how far and how low they will go to deny Wisconsin families access to help navigating health care coverage options.” Peterson noted the killing of Assembly Bill 878, the Family Health Benefits Bill, in a procedural objection by Senator Fitzgerald (R-Juneau) at the eleventh hour in the Wisconsin Senate. AB 878 hoped to address the significant changes that some families face with health care reform in an already confusing system. ABC for Health partnered with the Department of Health Services and the Office of The Commissioner of Insurance as well as lead sponsors Senator Miller and Representative Donna Seidel to develop the “Family Health Benefits Bill” (AB 878) to lay the foundation to support a statewide network of Health Benefits Counselors in Wisconsin. “The bill, unfortunately, was politicized,” continued Peterson, “connecting families to health coverage should not be a partisan issue – it’s about helping Wisconsin families get the health care coverage they need and deserve.”

Peterson presented more reaction to this legislative session, including insight on the BadgerCare Plus Basic vote and a look ahead to health reform’s high risk pools, in a web cast presentation from the ABC for Health Studio available to the media and the public at this link:

<http://96.60.62.171/mediasiteabc/Viewer/?peid=dcb19669164b444dba4f0f66396bb568>

The Family Health Benefits Bill proposed to take the first steps to help overwhelmed families across Wisconsin. Families and individuals need help accessing health care and attaining and using health insurance coverage. Many under the age of 60 experience complex and convoluted health care coverage issues at the worst possible time-when they or a loved one are ill. Still others are eligible for programs that are too difficult to understand without individual advocacy. Unpaid medical bills, collection actions and bankruptcy are often the outcome for overwhelmed families. “Despite your efforts to kill this bill, we’re going to work even harder to educate folks, to work with HealthWatch Wisconsin, to make sure that people understand their coverage options and legal rights to challenge coverage denials,” Peterson said.

ABC for Health is a Wisconsin-based, nonprofit, public interest law firm dedicated to linking children and families, particularly those with special health care needs, to health care benefits and services. ABC for Health’s mission is to provide information, advocacy tools, legal services and expert support needed to obtain, maintain, and finance health care coverage and services.