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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: Health Care Reform: The Home Stretch!

Madison, WI – “Health care reform is in the home stretch,” said Bobby Peterson, public interest attorney and director of ABC for Health. On March 8, ABC for Health filmed an edition of its popular, online policy talk show, the HealthWatch WatchDog. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi identified March 18th as a target for a vote on health reform. Not only is the discussion about strategy—getting a simple majority and key votes, but about substance, such as creating a health care program that prevents waste, fraud, and abuses that drive up cost.

“President Obama has melded certain aspects of the original House and Senate bills, and integrated four Republican issues raised at the summit meeting. These include: sending investigators disguised as patients to uncover fraud and waste; expanding medical malpractice reform pilot programs; increasing payments to Medicaid providers; and expanding the use of health savings accounts.” “But,” Peterson emphasized, “Fraud cuts multiple way- public and private programs can inappropriately deny access to health benefit recipients. If we ‘send out the secret police’ for billing fraud, we must ALSO look at inappropriate eligibility denials. We went down this fraud hunting path in Wisconsin in 2004. Interestingly, the Legislative Audit Bureau did not find rampant fraud but did find that 1100 people were inappropriately denied program in January of 2004 alone!” (Find the report here: <http://www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lab/reports/04-11Full.pdf>.)

Peterson presented more detail on the prospects and path of national health reform 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=60fae7ec146a43a1afc22d226109a930>

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.

