

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Newt Gingrich, Innovator on Healthcare Policy, to Keynote NC State's Emerging Issues Forum**

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Newt Gingrich, former speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, will be the keynote speaker Feb. 7 at the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Emerging Issues Forum, "My Health is Your Business: Making Healthcare Work in North Carolina."

The two-day forum, hosted by the Institute for Emerging Issues at North Carolina State University, also features Tommy Thompson, who is completing his term as secretary U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; governors, CEOs of major corporations and prominent healthcare providers.

Gingrich will deliver the forum's keynote address at 8:30 a.m. Feb. 7 at the university's Jane S. McKimmon Center. Thompson, will deliver the keynote luncheon address at 12:40 p.m. on Feb. 8.

After leaving Congress, Gingrich founded the Center for Health Transformation and wrote a book, *Saving Lives & Saving Money*, in which he proposes a 21<sup>st</sup> century system of health and healthcare that places the individual at the center of care. He urges that the measure of success be a better outcome at lower cost, and argues that doctors and hospitals should take full advantage of existing technologies.

Thompson's term as the nation's leading advocate for the health and welfare of all Americans ends prior to the forum. As secretary, he launched initiatives to reorganize the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to encourage greater responsiveness; clear the backlog of waivers and state plan amendments, approving 1,400 and thereby providing health insurance to 1.8 million lower-income Americans throughout the nation; and strengthen the nation's preparedness for a bioterrorism attack. Prior to his Cabinet position, Thompson served 14 years as governor of Wisconsin. As governor, he gained national attention for his leadership on welfare reform, expanded access to healthcare and education.

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Other forum speakers include: Steven S. Reinemund, CEO of PepsiCo; Peter Peterson, former secretary of the U.S. Department of Commerce and president, the Concord Coalition; Ron Pollack, executive director, Families USA; former Sen. John Breaux of Louisiana, vice chair of a new national panel on tax reform; Michael Porter, professor, Harvard Business School and author of *Fixing Competition in U.S. Healthcare*; and U.S. Rep. Mel Watt of Charlotte, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

North Carolina Gov. Michael Easley and Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen, who recently announced changes to TennCare, a state expanded Medicaid program, also will speak.

In addition, a roundtable discussion on North Carolina healthcare features Bob Greczyn, CEO of Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina; William Roper, dean, UNC-Chapel Hill Medical School; Chris Viehbacher, president, US Pharmaceuticals, GlaxoSmithKline; Keith Crisco, CEO Asheboro Elastics; and Carmen Hooker Odom, secretary, N.C. Department of Health and Human Services.

Former North Carolina Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. created the Emerging Issues Forum in 1985 and has served as the chair of the Emerging Issues Institute since it was established in 2002. He will issue a Call to Action at the conclusion of the forum.

Forum participants will debate policy proposals on such issues as Medicaid, provider performance, uncompensated care, child health and easing employer-based coverage; and examine innovative proposals on increasing healthcare access through technology, providing care to dislocated workers and creating healthier communities through street, park and landscape design.

The registration fee for the two-day forum, including luncheons, is \$175. Students may register for \$50.

The Institute for Emerging Issues is a “think and do” tank at North Carolina State University. The institute is a catalyst for innovative public policy through its research, ideas, debate and action that encourages civic leadership in business, government and higher education. To learn more about the institute, please visit its Web site at [www.emergingissues.org](http://www.emergingissues.org).