

U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (MO-08) today offered an amendment to prevent the Internal Revenue Service from hiring new personnel or initiating any other measures to require Americans to purchase health insurance. The measure was approved in the U.S. House of Representatives by a vote of 246-182.

"This is a referendum on the health care bill as a whole, but the individual mandate represents to me one of the very worst aspects of that law. The mandate is, put simply, a requirement that citizens engage in an economic activity. It has already been found unconstitutional, and this Congress will make a major priority of the effort to stop the IRS from enforcing it," Emerson said.

Emerson says the administration has made no secret of its intention to hire more than a thousand IRS enforcement agents and spend hundreds of millions of dollars to enact provisions of the health care law.

As she debated her amendment on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives earlier today, Emerson said: "States (including my home state of Missouri where a ballot initiative has already passed saying that the individual mandate to buy health insurance should be repealed), small businesses across the country, and individuals of their own volition deserve the chance to speak on this important matter in the courts before the law compels them to spend money they don't have, lay off employees they value, and add extraordinary new burdens to the fiscal responsibilities of state governments."