**Number of Insured Americans Up for First Time Since**

**BY THE NUMBERS**

**Fewer Uninsured**
Both the number and percentage of Americans without health insurance fell last year, according to new Census Bureau figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERCENT UNINSURED</th>
<th>SEX</th>
<th>RACE AND ETHNICITY</th>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</th>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>Less than $25,000</td>
<td>No high school diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>$25,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>High school graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45 to 64</td>
<td>$50,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>Associate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>65 and older</td>
<td>$75,000 and more</td>
<td>Bachelor's degree or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>Less than $25,000</td>
<td>No high school diploma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>18 to 24</td>
<td>$25,000 to $49,999</td>
<td>High school graduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>25 to 34</td>
<td>$50,000 to $74,999</td>
<td>Associate degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>35 to 44</td>
<td>$75,000 and more</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BY STATE**
- Texas
- Arizona
- New Mexico
- California
- Louisiana
- All U.S.
- Pennsylvania
- Iowa
- Hawaii
- Rhode Island
- Minnesota

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 25 — After remaining relentlessly for 11 years, the number of Americans without health insurance declined last year, to 42.6 million, a reduction of 1.7 million from 1998, the Census Bureau reported today.

The proportion of people without insurance also declined for the first time since 1987 — to 18.5 percent in 1999, from 16.3 percent in 1998.

The robust economy and an expansion of government programs contributed to the decline, economists and health policy experts said.

With the unemployment rate at 4.1 percent, a 30-year low, many employers have found that they must offer more health insurance to attract and retain workers. In addition, low-income people are receiving coverage from government programs created in recent years.

Robert J. Mills, a statistician at the Census Bureau, said, "The driving force behind this improvement was an increase in the likelihood of people having employment-based health insurance."

The number of people with health insurance through their employers rose last year by 3.4 million, to 172 million. This change accounted for 65 percent of the increase in the number of people with health insurance.

Recent studies have found rapid increases in the cost of employer-paid health coverage, which could make it difficult to sustain the growth in the number of people covered by the plans.

For children, as for the population as a whole, coverage increased last year. The number of uninsured children declined to 10 million last year, from 11.1 million in 1998. The proportion of children without coverage declined as well, to 13.8 percent from 15.4 percent.

The plight of the uninsured has emerged again as a political issue, in Congress and in many of this year's election campaigns, including the presidential race.

President Clinton welcomed the news, saying: "I am extremely pleased with today's announcement. I believe it validates our health care and economic policies."

The number of uninsured is still nearly three million higher than when Mr. Clinton took office in 1993.

Since Congress rejected his proposal for universal health insurance in 1994, Mr. Clinton has been advocating smaller steps to expand coverage. The White House, Congress and governors all have been working to increase coverage for children, in particular, and today's data offered some evidence that the efforts were working.

The number of people covered by...