



National Health Council

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National Health Council
President
Myrl Weinberg, CAE
Ex Officio Member

January 20, 2010

Dear Members of the 111th Congress:

The National Health Council (NHC), an organization providing a united voice for the more than 133 million people with chronic diseases and disabilities and their family caregivers, strongly supports the efforts of the Congress to enact comprehensive, meaningful health care reform that will benefit the patient community. Made up of more than 100 member organizations and businesses, the NHC is the only organization of its kind that brings together all segments of the health community. Our core membership includes 50 of the nation's leading patient advocacy groups, which ultimately control our governance. Other members include professional and membership associations, nonprofit organizations with an interest in health, and major pharmaceutical, medical device, and biotechnology companies.

The NHC supports legislation that incorporates core principles essential to the chronic disease and disability patient community. These principles include covering everyone, curbing costs responsibly rather than simply shifting costs to patients, guaranteeing coverage regardless of pre-existing conditions, eliminating lifetime and annual caps on health insurance, and ensuring access to long-term and end-of-life care. These values transcend partisan differences, benefiting not only the patient and family caregiver community but society as a whole by meeting our shared health care needs while also addressing rapidly rising health care spending.

Despite the political circumstances literally changing overnight, the day-to-day realities for the Americans we represent continue to be filled with health challenges and financial uncertainty as they struggle with diseases and disabilities. We urge you to continue working to accomplish the long-sought goal of health care reform to help those most in need of a better functioning health care system.

The NHC deeply appreciates the months of hard work Congress has already invested in health care reform, and we have worked closely with many Members to ensure that the interests of the patient and caregiver community are addressed in the legislation that emerges. Again, the NHC strongly urges you to move forward with health care reform in a manner that ensures that the needs of all Americans are met. We look forward to continuing to serve as a partner and resource in that effort.

Sincerely,

Myrl Weinberg, CAE
President