

HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA NOW!

February 12, 2009

Dear Senator,

Health Care for America Now (HCAN) is a national grassroots movement powered by millions of people working to win in 2009 a guarantee of quality, affordable health care we all can count on. We urge your support for the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which includes provisions needed to preserve coverage for many of the millions who have lost, or will lose, health care coverage.

In particular, we support the provision to temporarily subsidize COBRA costs for unemployed workers. COBRA coverage is prohibitively expensive for many families who have just suffered a job loss. In fact, a recent report found that nationally, unemployed workers would need to spend 84% of their unemployment income, on average, to pay for family COBRA coverage. Subsidizing COBRA will allow millions of people to afford this option and maintain coverage.

We also strongly support substantial aid to states to meet rising Medicaid costs. The \$87 billion in assistance to States will allow states to weather the economic storm without resorting to drastic cuts to enrollment. We know from previous experience that temporarily increasing FMAP will protect beneficiaries and provide the needed state relief.

Third, we support the provisions on health information technology and comparative effectiveness. These smart investments will improve the safety and effectiveness of care while potentially reducing its cost. The additional funding for comparative effectiveness research is an opportunity to gather evidence and data on what treatments work best for all subpopulations and communities, and the broad adoption of electronic health information technology will be pivotal to increasing the efficiency of the U.S. health care system, improving the quality of care provided, and significantly reducing medical errors.

Our current economic condition highlights the need for comprehensive health care reform. As people become more economically vulnerable, they should not have to worry about also losing access to health care. Health Care for America Now looks forward to working with the 111th

HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA **NOW!**

Congress and President Obama to win a guarantee of quality, affordable health care for every man, woman, and child in America in 2009.

Sincerely,



Richard Kirsch

National Campaign Manager
Health Care for America Now