

April 1, 2009

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The undersigned companies and associations applaud your commitment to comprehensive, bipartisan health care reform, and share your belief that all Americans should have access to affordable health care coverage. As voluntary providers of health care to more than 170 million Americans, employers are leading the way in helping to improve our health care system. While firmly committed to helping workers and their families meet their health care needs, employers are also struggling with health care costs.

We have a direct and real stake in the outcome of health reform efforts. For decades, employers have provided health benefits for solid business reasons. Since 1999, however, employment-based health insurance premiums have increased 120 percent, compared to cumulative inflation of 44 percent and cumulative wage growth of 29 percent during the same period. If we fail to improve our health care system, rising health care costs will threaten the viability of U.S. businesses of all sizes and put job security, pay increases and other vital employee benefits at risk for millions of American workers.

A strategy to control costs must be the foundation of any effort to improve the health care system. Controlling spiraling health care costs benefits every American seeking access to quality, affordable care and makes it possible for employers to continue their role as voluntary sponsors of health plans for their employees. Faced with a severe and continuing economic crisis, employers simply cannot absorb new burdens, such as specific coverage levels or payment requirements, no matter how well intentioned.

Fortunately, many of the proposals to control costs can also improve quality and value. Health IT is one example, but there are many others. Employers have led the way in driving for a higher quality, evidence-based health care system and have an urgent interest in finding solutions that foster continuous quality improvement.

Any successful reform effort must build on the strengths of America's voluntary employer-based system while ensuring there is a greater variety of affordable

private health plan options in the marketplace for all. By making it easier, not harder, for employers to provide quality health coverage for workers and their families we can not only strengthen health security, we can strengthen our nation's economic security.

We are eager to work with you to find solutions for this urgent national priority.

Sincerely,

Acry Fab, Inc.
Alcoa Inc.
Allegiance Benefit Plan Management, Inc.
American Administration Services Co.
American Airlines
American Bakers Association
American Benefits Council
American Boiler Manufacturers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Hotel & Lodging Association
American Rental Association
American Society of Home Inspectors
American Staffing Association
American Veterinary Medical Association
AmeriGas Propane, Inc.
Aon Corp.
Arizona Chamber of Commerce
Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.
Associated Industries of Massachusetts
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Association of Ship Brokers & Agents
Assurant, Inc.
Auntie Anne's, Inc.
Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association
Avaya Inc.
Ball Corporation
Battery Council International
Best Buy Co., Inc.
Birmingham (AL) Regional Chamber of Commerce
Bison Gear & Engineering
Boeing
BTE Technologies, Inc.
Buck Consultants, LLC.
Buffalo Wild Wings, Inc.
Business Roundtable

Case New Holland
Caterpillar Inc.
Chevron Corporation
Chicopee Chamber of Commerce (MA)
Chrysler LLC
CIGNA
Clark & Associates of Nevada, Inc.
Computing Technology Industry Association (CompTIA)
Corporate Healthcare Coalition
Darden Restaurants Inc.
Deere & Company
Delta Airlines
Deseret Mutual
Dollar General Corporation
DTE Energy
Eastman Kodak Company
EBS Advisors, Inc.
El Paso Corporation
Employers Council on Flexible Compensation
Exelon Corporation
Express Employment Professionals
F.C. Brengman & Associates
FMC Corporation
Food Marketing Institute
Ford
Fox Entertainment Group
Gap Inc.
Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce (NJ)
General Mills
General Motors Corporation
Goodrich Corporation
Great Plains Energy Incorporated
Greater New Haven Chamber of Commerce
Harris Corp.
HealthCare 21 Business Coalition
Healthways
Honeywell
HR Policy Association
Independent Electrical Contractors
Independent Office Products & Furniture Dealers Association
Ingram Industries Inc.
Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers - United States of America
International Foodservice Distributors Association
International Franchise Association
International Housewares Association
JELD-WEN, Inc.

Jostens, Inc.
Koller Enterprises Inc.
Kraft Foods Inc.
Lamiglas, Inc.
Los Angeles (CA) Chamber of Commerce
Louisiana Business Group on Health
Lowe's Companies, Inc.
Manhattan Chamber of Commerce
Maryland Chamber of Commerce
MassMutual Financial Groups
Medco
Meridian Health
MetLife
Miles Fiberglass & Composites, Inc.
Mobile (AL) Area Chamber of Commerce
Monsanto Company
Montana Chamber of Commerce
Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Association
Motorola, Inc.
Mutual of Omaha
National Association of Computer Consultant Businesses
National Association of Convenience Stores
National Association of Health Underwriters
National Association of Home Builders
National Association of Manufacturers
National Association of Theatre Owners
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors
National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association
National Business Group on Health
National Coalition on Benefits
National Federation of Independent Business
National Funeral Directors Association
National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association
National Restaurant Association
National Retail Federation
National Roofing Contractors Association
National Rural Electric Cooperative Association
National Tooling and Machining Association
New Jersey Chamber of Commerce
Northeastern Retail Lumber Association
Northwestern Mutual
Palm Desert (CA) Chamber of Commerce
Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker LLP
Pharmaceutical Care Management Association
Phoenix Electric Mfg. Co.
Pietzsch, Bonnett & Womack, PA

PPG Industries
Precision Metalforming Association
Principal Financial Group
Printing Industries of America
Professional Golfers' Association of America
Quality Float Works, Inc.
Raytheon Company
Red Bud Industries, Inc.
Reno Sparks (NV) Chamber of Commerce
Retail Industry Leaders Association
Rochester Business Alliance (NY)
Ryder System, Inc.
Santa Clara (CA) Chamber of Commerce
Scottsdale (AZ) Chamber of Commerce
Sears Holdings Corporation
Sebago Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce (ME)
Self-Insurance Institute of America
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council
Snyder's of Hanover
Society for Human Resource Management
Society of American Florists
Society of the Plastics Industry
South Carolina Business Coalition on Health
Specialty Equipment Market Association
Spring Consulting Group LLC
Stuart/Martin County (FL) Chamber of Commerce
SUPERVALU INC.
TechAmerica
Tempe (AZ) Chamber of Commerce
Textile Rental Services Association of America
The Adhesive and Sealant Council, Inc.
The Association for Suppliers of Printing, Publishing and Converting Technologies
The Black & Decker Corporation
The Council of Insurance Agents & Brokers
The Dow Chemical Company
The ERISA Industry Committee
The Financial Services Roundtable
The New Jersey Business and Industry Association
The Savitz Organization, Inc.
Timesavers, Inc.
Tire Industry Association
Tyco Electronics
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Foodservice, Inc.
Union Pacific Corporation
United States Steel Corporation

Unum
UPS
Verizon Communications
Visant Corporation
Volvo Group North America
Waste Management
Wedding and Event Videographers Association International
WellPoint, Inc.
Western Growers
WillisHRH
Xerox Corporation
Yazaki North America Inc.

cc: Members of the U.S. House of Representatives
Members of the United States Senate