



AMERICAN BENEFITS COUNCIL

March 14, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders:

The American Benefits Council (Council) urges you to include legislation stabilizing the individual health insurance market in the omnibus appropriations bill for fiscal year 2018.

The Council is a public policy organization representing principally Fortune 500 companies and other organizations that assist employers of all sizes in providing employee benefits. Collectively, the Council's members directly sponsor or provide services to retirement and health plans covering virtually all Americans participating in employer-sponsored benefit plans.

Instability in the individual insurance market and the resulting loss of health coverage for many Americans has obvious serious consequences for the people directly affected. For two compelling reasons, the stability of the individual market also has a direct and palpable impact on employers that sponsor health coverage – as well as millions of Americans who currently or previously worked for employer sponsors of health benefits – even though employers do not directly purchase coverage in the individual market.

Employers rely upon the individual market as the venue where their part-time employees and retirees not yet eligible for Medicare obtain coverage. An unstable

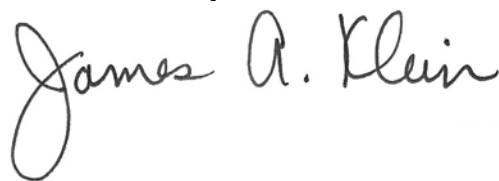
market and the corresponding higher costs makes the market a less viable option for those individuals.

In addition, destabilization increases uncompensated care, resulting in cost-shifting from health care providers to other purchasers of health care services. Employers are, by far, the largest private-sector purchaser of health care coverage.

The 178 million Americans covered by employer-sponsored plans represent approximately nine times the number covered in the individual market. Not only is a stable market vitally important for those who directly obtain coverage in that market, but the instability of the individual market has reverberations to employer-sponsored plans as well.

We urge Congress to take immediate action to ensure that millions of Americans with employer-provided health coverage, and the companies that sponsor that coverage, are protected from the negative consequences of an unstable individual health insurance market. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James A. Klein". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

James A. Klein
President