



AMERICAN BENEFITS  
COUNCIL

## NEWS RELEASE

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*Reaction to White House executive order*

### **Council supports enhanced health care cost/quality transparency, HSA reforms**

WASHINGTON, DC - "The one health care issue that most concerns employers – the providers of health coverage for more than 181 million Americans – is the matter of cost," American Benefits Council Senior Vice President, Health Policy, Ilyse Schuman, said today. "Improving health care price and quality transparency, as outlined in today's White House executive order, is essential to driving down costs, improving value and putting money back in the pockets of working families."

The executive order signed by the president, in addition to expanding the disclosure of price and quality information, also directs key regulatory agencies to implement a number of recommendations long endorsed by the Council.

**Establishment of uniform quality measures:** "The Council supports the development of consistent quality metrics to improve care," Schuman said. "Without reliable data, we cannot progress to a system in which we pay for quality rather than quantity."

**Modernization of health savings accounts (HSAs):** "HSAs give employers and employees more freedom and flexibility to spend their health care dollars, but these vehicles have been largely ignored by policymakers since their inception," Schuman said. "Enhancing the health plans used with HSAs to cover more preventive services to be covered pre-deductible is a common-sense move to make people healthier and lower costs in the long run."

Both of these provisions were specifically recommended in the Council's 2014 public policy strategic plan, [A 2020 Vision: Flexibility and the Future of Employee Benefits](#). The Council has also emphasized the need to control costs and improve quality as part of its work with the U.S. Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee as it works toward bipartisan solutions on the problem of high health costs, including matters of transparency and "surprise" medical billing. The Council's comprehensive recommendations are embodied in a [March 1 letter to the HELP Committee](#).

"We commend the Administration for recognizing the need to make health care more transparent. We look forward to working with the executive branch agencies to ensure that the prospective rules deliver better value for workers with job-based health coverage and help employers drive innovation that improves the health care system as a whole."

For more information on health policy matters, or to arrange an interview with Ilyse Schuman, senior vice president, health policy, contact Jason Hammersla, Council senior director of communications, at [jhammersla@abcstaff.org](mailto:jhammersla@abcstaff.org) or by phone at 202-289-6700 (office) or (202) 422-4652 (cell).

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*The Council is a public policy organization whose members include over 220 of the world's largest corporations, as ranked by Fortune and Forbes. Collectively, the Council's members either directly sponsor or administer health and retirement benefits for virtually all Americans covered by employer-sponsored plans.*