



AMERICAN BENEFITS  
COUNCIL

December 22, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

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

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell:

As the Senate proceeds to final consideration of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, I am writing to share the views of the American Benefits Council (Council), an association representing primarily large employers and other organizations that sponsor directly or administer health and retirement plans covering more than 100 million Americans.

Over the course of the past year, the Council has consistently communicated its views regarding the elements of health care reform legislation that would improve quality, contain costs and expand coverage. Most recently, on December 15 the Council described, in a very extensive letter to all Senators, many proposed improvements to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that, if adopted, could help meet those goals.

In several respects the Senate bill avoids serious flaws contained in the measure passed by the House of Representatives. Moreover, the manager's amendment to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act makes a number of improvements from the version of the bill previously released. However, it also adds new provisions that impose further costs and burdens onto the health care system; and the manager's amendment simply did not address a number of other previously communicated concerns.

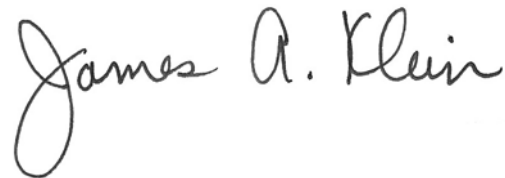
The Council in no way believes that a health reform bill needs to be perfect from our perspective in order to earn our support. Such a standard is both unrealistic and contrary to the spirit of compromise that is essential to any legislation, let alone a measure of this magnitude.

The vast majority of employers want to continue providing health coverage for their employees, but might no longer be able to do so if faced with unrealistic new

requirements or financial commitments. Consequently, sound health care reform legislation must protect the vitality of – and indeed strengthen – the employment-based health care coverage system that serves the vast majority of Americans. Regrettably, taken as a whole, the Senate bill still does not meet that test. Accordingly, the Council is not able to support the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

As the legislative process continues, the Council will remain actively engaged to advance practical solutions that support employers' ability to provide vitally important health care coverage for workers and their families.

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

cc: Senate Members