



May 30, 2012

The Honorable Dave Camp
Chairman
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Sander Levin
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Camp and Ranking Member Levin:

The Consumer Directed Health Coalition (CDHC) is comprised of a broad representation of employers, insurers and advocacy groups dedicated to ensuring that employees and employers have access to quality affordable health care.

Over the past few years, individuals, small employers, and large employers have turned to consumer directed health care options such as Health Savings Accounts (HSA), Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRA) and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) to provide quality coverage to their employees. Since HSAs were first created, enrollment has grown from 1 million covered lives to approximately 13.5 million in January of 2012. More importantly, as employees maintain coverage year-over-year, they enjoy the benefits of greater control over their health care spending and, in many cases, are able to save money from one year to the next. Moreover, FSAs and HRAs continue to be a sound option for employers to offer health care benefits to their employees.

We are writing to express our strong support for two bills being marked up by the Ways and Means Committee. The CDHC supports Representative Lynn Jenkins' bill, H.R. 5842, which would repeal a provision in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that severely restricts the ability of individuals to use HSA or FSA dollars to purchase over-the-counter medicines. We also support the Committee's consideration of H.R. 5858, which would make several improvements to HSAs and other consumer health care products, including allowing early retirees to use HSA funds to pay for employer-provided insurance, allowing spouses to make catch-up contributions to the same HSA account, providing wounded veterans the right to contribute to an HSA, and establishing a 60-day grace period that would give individuals time to enroll and establish an HSA account and still use the funds to pay for their medical care.

We urge the Committee to support these and other improvements to consumer directed health products to ensure they may be available in the future.

Sincerely,

American Benefits Council
American Hotel & Lodging Association
America's Health Insurance Plans
Associated Builders & Contractors
BlueCross BlueShield Association
Business Roundtable
The ERISA Industry Committee
International Franchise Association
National Association of Health Underwriters
National Business Group on Health
National Federation of Independent Business
National Restaurant Association
National Retail Federation
Retail Industry Leaders Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Cc: Members of the House Committee on Ways and Means