



---

*Protect, Prevent, Live Well*

October 16, 2009

The President  
The White House

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of the American Public Health Association (APHA), the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals and advocates in the world dedicated to promoting and protecting the health of the public and our communities, I write in strong support of passing comprehensive and affordable health reform legislation this year.

As you work with Congress to resolve the differences in the bills currently under consideration in the House and the Senate, **APHA urges you to express your support to Congress for the inclusion of the following provisions:**

- An affordable “public option” as a choice for health coverage. We believe a public option is essential to providing consumers with a competitive and affordable alternative to private insurance.
- A robust mandatory funding stream for prevention, wellness and public health activities – as included in the House and the Senate HELP Committee bills. This funding would strengthen our public health infrastructure and shift the current health system from a focus on treating illness, to one that prevents illness.
- Affordable coverage for all Americans that doesn’t discriminate against older adults or impose unreasonable spending on low income or middle income individuals and families.
- Strong public health and primary care workforce provisions including provisions to strengthen recruitment, training and retention and to create scholarship and loan repayment programs and other measures to address critical workforce shortages.
- Strong provisions to move toward the elimination of health inequities in all populations.

We thank you for your ongoing work on legislation to reform the nation’s health system and we look forward to working with you to ensure that the final bill sent to you by Congress improves the health of the American people and takes us closer to providing comprehensive and affordable health coverage for all.

Sincerely,

Georges C. Benjamin, MD, FACP, FACEP (E)  
Executive Director