



Protect, Prevent, Live Well

February 18, 2010

The Honorable Michael Bennet
702 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kirsten Gillibrand
478 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
107 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
713 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Bennet, Gillibrand, Merkley and Brown,

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 to thank you for efforts to encourage Majority Leader Reid to bring a public option to a vote before the full Senate through the budget reconciliation process. We fully support your work to bring this important issue to a vote and we look forward to working with you on this important effort.

APHA has long advocated for Congress to pass comprehensive and affordable health reform legislation with an emphasis on changing from a system that focuses on treating the sick to one that focuses on keeping people healthy. We believe the inclusion of a strong public option is critical to achieving that goal. Not only would a public option help to bring down costs – the Congressional Budget Office estimate some proposals under consideration could save \$25 billion – it would also provide consumers with choice, giving them a competitive alternative to private insurance coverage and increase access to important and live-saving preventive services.

We thank you for your ongoing efforts to enact meaningful health reform that includes a public option and we look forward to working with you to make passage of a public option and comprehensive and affordable health reform a priority in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

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