



# Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

*Barbara B. Kennelly, Chair*

June 22, 2010

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO), a coalition of national not-for-profit organizations representing nearly 60 million older Americans, strongly supports the nomination of Dr. Donald Berwick to the position of Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

We believe that Dr. Berwick would bring to CMS the knowledge and expertise needed to lead the transformation of the American health care delivery system into one that better serves all Americans. Under his leadership, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) has led the way in transforming health care delivery systems to focus on quality and improved care for patients of all ages. Further, Dr. Berwick has worked with hospitals to implement best practices and to reduce unnecessary health complications and even deaths caused by medical errors. He is an early proponent of adoption and meaningful use of health information technology to better share information about patient care and about individual patients. Under his leadership, IHI has developed systems and roadmaps that help hospitals implement changes that result in higher quality care for their patients.

This track record makes Dr. Berwick uniquely qualified to lead CMS as the new health care reform law is implemented. The recent passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act (together known as the Affordable Care Act) brings many advantages to seniors. It improves Medicare's fiscal health and extends the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund, eliminates barriers to preventive care, closes the "donut hole" drug coverage gap, and cracks down on insurance company abuses. It also provides a greater emphasis on quality of care and coordination of services and benefits for Medicare, Medicaid, and the individual and employer markets. Dr. Berwick's experience as a leader of delivery system improvement will allow him to make an invaluable contribution to the successful implementation of these reforms.

As organizations that represent older Americans, we want to ensure that the Affordable Care Act is implemented with an eye toward the needs of consumers and patients. Dr. Berwick is committed to patient-centered care that focuses on the needs of each individual. The reforms he has developed are consumer-oriented, promoting access to information and a voice for the consumer in the decision-making process.

10 G Street, NE, Suite 600, Washington, DC 20002 ♦ (202) 216-8387 ♦ (202) 787-3726 (Fax)  
Email: [LCAO@ncpssm.org](mailto:LCAO@ncpssm.org) ♦ Website: [www.LCAO.org](http://www.LCAO.org)

In sum, we believe that Dr. Berwick is highly qualified to serve as CMS Administrator, and we urge you to act quickly to approve his nomination.

Sincerely,

AFSCME Retirees

Alliance for Retired Americans

American Association for International Aging

American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging

American Federation of Teachers Program on Retirement and Retirees

American Geriatrics Society

American Public Health Association

American Society of Consultant Pharmacists

Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.

Families USA

International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace

& Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW)

Medicare Rights Center

National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys

National Alliance for Caregiving

National Asian Pacific Center on Aging

National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs

National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers

National Association of Social Workers

National Association of State Units on Aging

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care

National Council on Aging

National Indian Council on Aging

National Senior Corps Association

OWL - The Voice of Midlife and Older Women

PHI - Quality Care for Quality Jobs

Service Employees International Union

Services and Advocacy for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Elders (SAGE)

Volunteers of America