



Leadership Council of Aging Organizations

March 24, 2010

Dear Senator:

The Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO), a coalition of national not-for-profit organizations representing nearly 60 million older Americans.

This has been a historic week for advancing health care coverage for all Americans, including older adults. With the President's signature on the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, the first important step was taken. We now urge you to promptly pass the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010 – without amendments – to help make affordable, high-quality health care available to all Americans. This legislation offers important benefits for seniors.

The Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 will:

- Close Medicare's "doughnut hole" drug coverage gap for *all* beneficiaries. This has been a top LCAO priority. It will help older Americans afford the drugs they need to stay healthy, which saves Medicare funds in the long run.
- Improve Medicare's fiscal health and extend the solvency of the Medicare Trust Fund.
- Make coverage affordable for hard-working middle-income families who now, all too often, are uninsured because the cost of coverage is beyond their means.
- Strengthen the fight against fraud, waste and abuse, a key component to better controlling rising costs in our health care system.

These provisions build on the solid foundation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, which the Senate passed in December. Together these two bills will protect and strengthen Medicare's guaranteed benefits, eliminate barriers to preventive care, and crack down on insurance company abuses, such as denying affordable coverage because of age or health status. The legislative package will also provide affordable coverage options to millions of Americans and small businesses. In addition, it will help Americans remain in their own homes as they age by establishing a program to help pay for long-term services and supports.

We urge you to vote in favor of the Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010. The economic and physical health of older adults and their families will benefit from your support.

Sincerely,

John Rother, Chair
Leadership Council of Aging Organizations