



WASHINGTON BUREAU · NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
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ACTION ALERT

DATE: August 29, 2009
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

NAACP SUPPORTS HEALTH CARE REFORM THAT INCLUDES AN EXPANSION OF COVERAGE TO ALL AMERICANS AND ELIMINATES RACIAL HEALTH CARE DISPARITIES

***NAACP URGES CONGRESS TO BRING UP COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE
REFORM RIGHT AFTER LABOR DAY***

THE ISSUE:

Too many Americans today are straining under the burden of two related trends: shrinking health care coverage and rising health care costs. Over the last decade, millions of Americans have found themselves uninsured, and millions more have become underinsured as the value of their coverage has declined. In the years 2008 – 2010, it is estimated that approximately 6,000 people a day, or almost 7 million Americans total, will lose their health insurance. At the same time, health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs have risen steadily, and the number of families who are facing unmanageably high health care costs continues to grow. In fact, nearly one in four non-elderly Americans are in families that will spend more than 10% of their pre-tax dollars on health care in 2009, and the vast majority of them (more than 82%) have health care insurance. Furthermore, in the United States today the color of your skin, your ethnic background and where you live can not only influence your health care access and quality; they can determine them. And while medical science has made a lot of advances over the last 10 years, the gains made by the discovery of new drugs and treatments have not passed on to all segments of our population.

Health care reform is currently moving through Congress, and the NAACP is working hard to ensure that the final product has the following four elements: (1) Full health care coverage that is affordable to every individual, family and business which also provides coverage for pre-existing conditions; (2) Standard, comprehensive health care benefits that meet everyone's needs from preventive to chronic care; (3) The choice of a private (allowing recipients to stay with their existing health care coverage if they choose) or public health care plan, which includes a new public health care plan (the "public option") that will provide a guaranteed backup which will always be there to ensure quality, affordable health care coverage no matter what; and (4) Equity in health care access, treatment, research, and resources to people and communities of color and stronger health services in low-income communities.

More...

THE ACTION WE NEED YOU TO TAKE:

Contact your Representative and both your Senators and **URGE THEM TO PASS COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE THAT OFFERS AFFORDABLE, QUALITY CARE TO ALL AMERICANS AND ELIMINATES RACIAL HEALTH CARE DISPARITIES.** To contact your Senators and Representative, you may:

✓ **Make a Phone Call:**

Call your Senators and your Representative in Washington by dialing the Capitol Switchboard and asking to be transferred to your Senators'/Congressman's offices. The switchboard phone number is **(202) 224-3121** (see message section, below).

✓ **Write a Letter**

To write letters to your Senators, send them to:

The Honorable (name of Senator)

U.S. Senate

Washington, D.C. 20510

To write a letter to your Representative, send it to:

The Honorable (name of Representative)

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

**A SAMPLE
LETTER IS
ATTACHED**

✓ **Send a Fax**

If you would like to send a fax, call your Senators' or Representative's offices (through the Capitol switchboard) and ask for their fax numbers (you can use either the attached sample letter or the message box, below).

✓ **Send an E-Mail**

To send an e-mail to your Senators, go to www.senate.gov; click on "*Find Your Senators*". Look up your Senators by state; go to their web sites for e-mail addresses.

To send an e-mail to your Representative, go to www.house.gov, and click on "*Write Your Representative*" (on the left hand side, just under "find your Representative"). This will help you identify who your congressman is and how to contact him/her.

REMEMBER TO CONTACT BOTH YOUR SENATORS!!!!

THE MESSAGE

- Too many Americans today are straining under the burden of two related trends: shrinking health care coverage and rising health care costs.
- In the United States today the color of your skin, your ethnic background and where you live can not only influence your health care access and quality; they can determine them.
- Any health care plan that is comprehensive needs to ensure affordable, quality care to all Americans and eliminates racial health care disparities including coverage for pre-existing conditions.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS IMPORTANT MATTER!!!

If you have any questions, call Hilary Shelton at the Washington Bureau at (202) 463-2940.

MEMBERSHIP IS POWER! JOIN THE NAACP TODAY.

To become an NAACP member or to sign up for e-mail legislative and press updates, visit www.naacp.org

Sample Letter

(date)

The Honorable _____
United States Senate / House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20510 / 20515

RE: COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM

Dear Senator / Representative _____;

As your constituent, I would urge you to do all you can to ensure that comprehensive health care reform ensures affordable, quality care to all Americans and eliminates racial health care disparities. Too many Americans today are straining under the burden of two related trends: shrinking health care coverage and rising health care costs. Over the last decade, millions of Americans have found themselves uninsured, and millions more have become underinsured as the value of their coverage has declined. At the same time, health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs have risen steadily, and the number of families who are facing unmanageably high health care costs continues to grow. Furthermore, in the United States today the color of your skin, your ethnic background and where you live can not only influence your health care access and quality; they can determine them. And while medical science has made a lot of advances over the last 10 years, the gains made by the discovery of new drugs and treatments have not passed on to all segments of our population.

As such, any comprehensive health care reform package must: (1) Provide full health care coverage that is affordable to every individual, family and business and covers all pre-existing conditions; (2) Contain standard, comprehensive health care benefits that meet everyone's needs from preventive to chronic care; (3) Provide individuals with the choice of a private or public health care plan, which includes a new public health care plan that will provide a guaranteed backup which will always be there to ensure quality, affordable health care coverage no matter what; and (4) Ensure equity in health care access, treatment, research, and resources to people and communities of color and stronger health services in low-income communities.

I understand that health care reform is complex and often confusing, but I hope that you will do your best to ensure that these four goals are met. Please contact me soon to let me know what you are doing on health care reform and what I can do, as a concerned American, to promote the goals I have outlined above.

Sincerely,

(sign and print your name and
remember to include your address)

**Remember to contact your
Representative and BOTH
your Senators.**