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October 29, 2009

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I congratulate Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the House leadership, and lead sponsor, Representative Dingell, for introducing the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962). I strongly urge you to support this historic bill that puts our country on the path to affordable, quality health care for all. It deserves the support of every member of Congress.

The bill provides health care insurance coverage for an additional 37 million Americans, increasing the overall coverage rate to 96%. This will not only provide peace of mind to millions of uninsured families, it will also reduce health care insurance rates for insured workers whose premium costs have risen due to uncompensated care. The choice of a public health care insurance option will provide needed competition in health insurance markets often dominated by just one or two private insurance companies. A public option will drive down costs and spur health care innovations. And, AFSCME supports the mandate that all but the smallest employers either provide coverage for their employees or contribute a meaningful sum to a fund to help pay for subsidies.

AFSCME also strongly commends the bill's approach to financing health care reform. Rather than taxing the health care benefits of middle-class Americans, the legislation asks the wealthiest Americans to pay their fair share, as well as identifies savings within existing programs.

AFSCME looks forward to working with you to reach our common goal of providing good, affordable health care for everyone. Workers and our entire nation expect and deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

GERALD W. McENTEE
International President

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American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

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