

NHMA



November 5, 2009

**National
Hispanic
Medical
Association™**

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Dear Representatives:

On behalf of the National Hispanic Medical Association, a nonprofit association representing 47,000 Hispanic physicians, we strongly support your efforts to reform health care this year. The NHMA mission is to improve the health of Hispanics and other underserved. We work with our NHMA Council of Medical Societies and the National Hispanic Health Professional Leadership Network and other partners as well with national Hispanic organizations & minority health coalitions in supporting your leadership to increase access to health to our communities and to all Americans

We **respectfully urge you to support passage of the Affordable Health Care for America Act (H.R. 3962)**. We strongly support the Affordable Health Care for America Act because it meets the four guiding principles of Latinos United for Healthcare:

- H.R. 3962 would make health insurance affordable and better.** Through affordability credits, incentives for small businesses, a public option for the uninsured who cannot afford private insurance, and other measures, the bill would ensure that almost all Americans and legal residents have access to health coverage. The bill improves existing coverage by strengthening consumer protections, such as barring insurance companies from discriminating against those with pre-existing conditions.
- H.R. 3962 would make significant steps towards ending minority health disparities.** The bill would promote prevention, address the need for cultural and linguistic competency in healthcare delivery, and support the recruitment of more diverse health professionals. The bill also includes support for the Office of Minority Health to coordinate the health disparities programs for our communities.
- H.R. 3962 does not include unfair or discriminatory measures.** The bill allows the Americans of Puerto Rico to participate in the insurance exchange and ensures that Puerto Rico receive its fair share of Medicaid funding, as Puerto Ricans contribute to Medicaid through their payroll taxes. The bill is free from onerous and costly verification provisions that would shut out low income, minority and senior Americans from accessing the health services they deserve. Also, the bill treats legal immigrants fairly, recognizing that as taxpayers, they deserve the same access to services as citizens.
- H.R. 3962 would increase prevention and public health programs that would transform our communities** with targeted funding for education, nutrition, cultural competence and language services so that Hispanics can lead healthier lives.

If enacted into law, the Affordable Health Care for America Act will make significant progress in improving the health status of Latinos and all Americans. In summary, **NHMA urges your support for H.R. 3962**. For any questions, please contact me at (202) 628-5895.

Sincerely,

Elena V. Rios, M.D., M.S.P.H.
President and CEO

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