

KEY VOTE ALERT!

December 18, 2009

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES SENATE:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce strongly supports health care reform, but strongly opposes H.R. 3590, the “Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act,” because H.R. 3590 would make health care more expensive, create onerous new burdens for businesses, hamper economic recovery, and implement a vast array of unwarranted new taxes.

The Chamber and the broader business community have been calling on Congress for years to approve health reform legislation. As the voluntary providers of health benefits to more than 170 million Americans, businesses have seen health care costs double in the last decade. The business community demands reasonable and meaningful reform that would begin to bend the cost curve so that businesses can afford to continue to provide health benefits to their workers. The Chamber believes Congress should approve comprehensive reform and universal health care coverage without jeopardizing employer-sponsored health insurance coverage and jobs. The Chamber supports insurance reforms, greater pooling for small businesses, and relief from costly state mandates that would create a more vibrant marketplace for health insurance. The Chamber also supports substantive payment reforms that would reward and improve the quality and efficiency of the health system. Unfortunately, H.R. 3590 in its expected form does not address these concerns in any meaningful way and the legislation could lead to higher costs and a more expensive health system in the future.

Because of the deficient and hasty process by which this legislation is being prepared, virtually no one outside of Congress has had an opportunity to review the manager’s amendment that will be considered as an addition to H.R. 3590. Even once the manager’s amendment is publicly released, the business community will not have adequate time to fully assess the major implications of this bill. It also appears certain that the Senate will not consider additional amendments to address the serious flaws in the bill.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world’s largest business federation representing more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, urges the Senate to reject the artificial deadlines and unworkable process that have resulted in this deeply flawed legislation. The Senate should reject H.R. 3590 and begin anew to craft bipartisan, meaningful health reform legislation that addresses the concerns expressed by the Chamber and the broader business community. The Chamber urges you to oppose cloture on the Reid substitute amendment, the manager’s amendment, and final passage. **The Chamber will consider votes on, or in relation to, H.R. 3590 in our annual *How They Voted* scorecard.**

Sincerely,



R. Bruce Josten



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