

May 2, 2011

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the undersigned groups representing millions of consumers, patients, and workers, we are writing to express our opposition to H.R. 1213, legislation to repeal the mandatory funding being provided to States under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) to establish American Health Benefit Exchanges.

The creation of state-based American Health Benefit Exchanges is a central element of the ACA's provisions to make affordable, high-quality health insurance coverage available to American consumers. Exchanges will provide individuals and small businesses with competitive, consumer-centered marketplaces for purchasing private health insurance, giving them greater choice at a better price than they currently can receive on their own.

Exchanges are a bipartisan idea. Of the first three states (Massachusetts, Utah, and California) to enact laws establishing insurance exchanges, all three were signed into law by Republican governors. To date, a vast majority of states have indicated an interest in establishing their own exchange, as opposed to electing to have the federal government run an exchange for their residents. In addition, virtually every state has been granted funding under the ACA authority to begin planning or implementing exchanges.

The exchange planning and establishment grants that H.R. 1213 would repeal are vital resources that states need to successfully implement health insurance exchanges, provide access to affordable, good-quality health coverage, and make effective use of taxpayer dollars. Although exchanges will ultimately be self-sustaining, without this critical funding, states will not have the resources they need to undertake the many tasks necessary to get their exchanges up and running. As a result, millions of Americans will lose access to affordable, adequate health insurance coverage. We urge you to oppose this legislation and to focus instead on constructive efforts to build upon the ACA.

Sincerely,

National Organizations:

Alliance for a Just Society  
American Association of People with Disabilities  
American Association on Health and Disability  
American Cancer Society-Cancer Action Network  
American Diabetes Association  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Federation of Teachers  
American Heart Association  
American Medical Rehabilitation Providers Association  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Brain Injury Association of America

Campaign for Community Change  
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities  
CHADD – Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder  
Children Now  
Community Access National Network  
Community Catalyst  
Community Organizations in Action  
Consumers Union  
Direct Care Alliance  
Easter Seals  
Families USA  
Health Care for America Now  
Human Rights Campaign  
International Union, United Auto Workers (UAW)  
Japanese American Citizens League  
Main Street Alliance  
Mental Health America  
NAACP  
National Alliance on Mental Illness  
National Assembly on School-Based Health Care  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators  
National Coalition for LGBT Health  
National Council of Jewish Women  
National Disability Rights Network to this letter.  
National Education Association  
National Health Law Program  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
National Partnership for Women & Families  
National Spinal Cord Injury Association  
National Women's Health Network  
National Women's Law Center  
Paralyzed Veterans of America  
Progressive States Action  
Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We Need  
Service Employees International Union  
The Arc of the United States  
United Spinal Association  
U.S. PIRG

State/Local Organizations:

Act for Women & Girls (California)  
AIDS Foundation of Chicago  
Black Women for Wellness (California)  
California Health Advocates  
California Pan-Ethnic Health Network  
Cal-Islander Humanitarian Association (California)

Campaign for Community Change  
Central Valley Partnership (California)  
Children's Defense Fund – California  
Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles  
Colorado Center on Law and Policy  
Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved  
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative  
Consumers for Affordable Health Care (Maine)  
Great Beginnings for Black Babies (California)  
Guam Communication Network (California)  
Having Our Say Coalition (California)  
Health Access California  
Indian People's Action  
Korean Community Center of the East Bay (California)  
Madera Coalition (California)  
Montana Organizing Project  
Nana's Wish (California)  
New York Immigration Coalition  
North Carolina Fair Share  
Oregon Action  
Pacific Islander Cancer Survivor's Network (California)  
Virginia Organizing  
Washington Community Action Network

NAIC Consumer Representatives:

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