



November 20, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), I am writing to express strong endorsement for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (H.R.3590). ACNM believes the bill will improve access to health care coverage, improve the health status of women and their newborns, and make necessary reforms to our nation's health care system. We want to acknowledge the hard work of the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee in crafting this important legislation.

As the health reform debate began this Congress, ACNM identified seven key principles as essential ingredients in health reform legislation:

- Providing universal coverage,
- Eliminating health disparities,
- Focusing health care resources on wellness, disease prevention and primary care services,
- Improving care integration and coordination,
- Aligning payment systems with evidence-based practice and optimal outcomes,
- Improving women's access to high quality care, and
- Improving maternal and infant health.

ACNM believes the Senate health reform package takes important strides toward addressing each of these important principals. We are therefore pleased to endorse this landmark legislation.

Moving forward, we ask that the Senate consider adopting provisions to begin to remedy the ongoing professional liability challenges across the nation that are driving many midwives and physicians away from providing maternity care. We also ask that you consider necessary modifications to the bill's primary care incentive provisions to ensure that all qualified primary care providers--including certified nurse-midwives--are eligible to receive these incentives under both Medicare and Medicaid. As we expand access to health care, it is absolutely critical that we ensure that all health care providers educated to provide primary care are available to do so.

Again, thank you for your leadership on this landmark legislation. For additional information on ACNM's priorities under health care reform, please contact our federal representative Patrick Cooney at (202) 347-0034.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lorrie Kline Kaplan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lorrie Kline Kaplan  
Executive Director