



## **ACNM's Endorsement of Senate Health Reform Legislation**

ACNM is pleased to announce support for the Senate health reform bill. While this bill continues to evolve, we believe it will take important steps toward improving access to health coverage, improving the health status of women and their newborns, and reforming our nation's health care system.

We recognize that all ACNM members do not support this legislation. The issues facing our health care system are complex and the solutions are not always clear nor necessarily politically feasible. Once a bill is passed in the Senate, more work will be done in a conference committee of House and Senate leaders before a bill goes to the President. Health reform will be a long and difficult ongoing process.

In endorsing this legislation, ACNM considered the following:

1. Nearly two decades of policy paralysis in Washington, D.C., even as health care quality and access deteriorated and costs escalated
2. Nearly two decades of hard work by ACNM elected leaders, Government Affairs Committee, members and staff to gain support of House and Senate leaders for equitable reimbursement for midwives and the important role of CNMs and CMs as full-scope women's health care providers
3. ACNM's [Seven Key Principles of Health Reform](#) published January 2009
4. The many provisions of the legislation benefiting women and their families
5. Due to ACNM's high level of policy engagement in 2009, Senate leaders who have championed our issues specifically reached out to seek our support

ACNM is encouraged by the work of major stakeholder organizations through the [National Priorities Partnership](#) (convened by the National Quality Forum) and other coalitions to fundamentally transform the way services are provided and reimbursed.

We ask Senate leaders to work to alleviate the professional liability challenges are driving many midwives and physicians out of maternity care. We also ask Senate leaders to ensure that all qualified primary care providers—including CNMs—are eligible for Medicare and Medicaid primary care incentives. We are very disappointed that House and Senate leaders have failed to recognize Certified Midwives, and will work to correct this omission through regulation in 2010.

We hope that ACNM members who do not support this bill can recognize the importance of our participation in these conversations. We have placed a high priority on being at the table and encourage members to stay involved and informed.

ACNM remains committed to working towards the success of federal health care reform and to the achievement of our [Seven Key Principles](#). We continue to welcome the input of our members on how best to do so.