



**American Hospital
Association**

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September 13, 2010

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid:

On behalf of the American Hospital Association (AHA), our more than 5,000 member hospitals, health systems, and other health care organizations, and our 40,000 individual members, I am writing to express our support for an amendment by Senator Bill Nelson (D-FL) to legislation that the Senate is expected to consider on September 14, H.R. 5297. The AHA is concerned that an alternative amendment, as currently drafted, would reduce the number of Americans expected to obtain health insurance coverage under health care reform. We believe the amendment authored by Senator Nelson addresses the concerns raised with Section 9006 of the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* without weakening a key attribute of the health reform law.

Our concern involves a proposal that seeks to repeal Section 9006 and replace the lost revenue by lowering the income threshold that triggers the exemption to waive the requirement for individuals to obtain health insurance coverage from 8 percent to 5 percent. The Congressional Budget Office and the Joint Committee on Taxation have estimated that this action would increase the number of Americans who are exempt from the individual mandate, thereby reducing by 2 million the number of Americans expected to acquire coverage under the health reform law.

Senator Nelson's alternative amendment addresses the concerns raised regarding the law's 1099 reporting requirement without making changes to the requirement that individuals purchase health insurance coverage. The individual responsibility to obtain health insurance is an essential foundation of the historic expansion of coverage that is part of the health reform law. The AHA has long held that shared responsibility is critical to achieving the reforms necessary to improve our nation's health.

The AHA appreciates your continued leadership and commitment to providing health care coverage for the many Americans in need.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President

CC: Senator Bill Nelson

