



March 31, 2011

The Honorable Joseph R. Pitts
Chairman, Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Health
Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pitts and Congressman Pallone:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations representing hospitals and health systems, we are writing regarding our concerns about legislation under consideration before your subcommittee that would eliminate the direct mandatory funding for certain programs created by *the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (ACA). Specifically, we would like to address H.R. 1213, which would repeal the funding for creation of state-based health insurance exchanges (section 1311 (a) of the ACA), as well as H.R. 1217, which would repeal funding for the Prevention and Public Health Fund (section 4002 of the ACA).

Implementation of the ACA will provide access to health care to many Americans who do not currently have coverage. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the ACA will extend coverage to approximately 32 million uninsured people, or about 94 percent of legal residents. The state health insurance exchanges – known as American Health Benefit Exchanges – will facilitate and manage enrollment. Therefore, any effort to deny funding to these exchanges would undermine the effort to insure more Americans.

The ACA also created a needed national investment in public health by focusing significant resources in prevention and wellness activities, including allocating through mandatory spending \$12.9 billion for fiscal years 2010-2019 to a Prevention and Public Health Fund. The Fund could provide grants to support state and community efforts that fight obesity, increase HIV testing, promote tobacco cessation and prevention programs, reduce diabetes and heart disease, expand mental health and substance abuse programs and track, monitor and respond to disease outbreaks. Enhanced funding for prevention and wellness services is an essential element in achieving the savings potential of coordinated care for achieving better health and health care in America.

We encourage you to maintain mandatory funding for both of these sections of the ACA.

Sincerely,

Rick Pollack
Executive Vice President
American Hospital Association

Bruce Siegel, MD, MPH
Chief Executive Officer
National Association of Public Hospitals and Health Systems