



Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA, Executive Vice President, CEO

July 16, 2009

The Honorable Charles B. Rangel
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rangel:

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the American Medical Association, I am writing to express our appreciation and support for H.R. 3200, the "America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009." This legislation includes a broad range of provisions that are key to effective, comprehensive health system reform. We urge members of the House Education and Labor, Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means Committees to favorably report H.R. 3200 for consideration by the full House.

In particular, we are pleased that the bill:

- Promises to extend coverage to all Americans through health insurance market reforms;
- Provides consumers with a choice of plans through a health insurance exchange;
- Includes essential health insurance reforms such as eliminating coverage denials based on pre-existing conditions;
- Recognizes that fundamental Medicare reforms, including repeal of the sustainable growth rate formula, are essential to the success of broader health system reforms;
- Encourages chronic disease management and care coordination through additional funding for primary care services, without imposing offsetting payment reductions on specialty care;
- Addresses growing physician workforce concerns;
- Strengthens the Medicaid program;
- Requires individuals to have health insurance, and provides premium assistance to those who cannot afford it;
- Includes prevention and wellness initiatives designed to keep Americans healthy;
- Makes needed improvements to the Physician Quality Reporting Initiative that will enable greater participation by physicians; and

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- Initiates significant payment and delivery reforms by encouraging participation in new models such as accountable care organizations and the patient-centered medical home.

The AMA looks forward to further constructive dialogue during the committee mark-up process. We pledge to work with the House committees and leadership to build support for passage of health reform legislation to expand access to high quality, affordable health care for all Americans.

This year, the AMA wants the debate in Washington to conclude with real, long overdue results that will improve the health of America's patients.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Maves". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mike" and last name "Maves" clearly distinguishable.

Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA