



## **Sample Letters to the Editor Thanking Senators, Representatives and Supporters for Passing Health Care Reform**

Here are some sample letters to thank Representatives and Senators who voted in favor of the bill. As always, personalize these as is appropriate for the author and the audience. If your Member has been working for health care reform for decades, or recently connected with your organization, acknowledge those specifics. These can also be edited and used in newspapers where your Members of Congress did not vote for the bill by thanking the House of Representatives and the Senate for what the bill will mean specifically in your state, and acknowledging the hard work of supporters in your community who worked to get the legislation passed.

### **From a small business owner**

As the owner of [Business] in [city], I want to write and thank [Senators and Representatives Names] for taking the right vote to pass national health care reform, which will help business owners like me better afford health insurance for their employees, and make sure that the plans I choose from don't top out or rescind coverage when someone actually gets sick.

This new law will provide tax credits to small business owners, allowing me to keep offering good health care to my employees and stay in the black without sacrificing growth.

I am so pleased to see that Congress has finally put the brakes on this country's runaway health care costs, and have told insurers that the jig's up on years of unfair practices and putting profits ahead of people. [Senators and Representatives Names] were on the right side of the most important thing I've seen Congress do in my lifetime, and I commend them for their votes on behalf of everyday Americans. Thank you for making quality, affordable health care more accessible to [city or state] families and businesses.

### **From a health care reform supporter**

As [name of newspaper] reported, [Senators and Representatives Names] stood up and passed an historic bill that will help millions of American families get better, more affordable health care – some who will be covered for the first time in their lives.

This country's health care crisis has meant that for many families, a big part of the American dream has been missing. Everyone seems to know someone – a family member, friend or neighbor – who was let down by their insurance when they needed it, took on medical debt, or didn't get medication because they couldn't afford it.

In truth, many of us have lived one procedure or pink slip away from our own health care crisis. But not anymore because [Senators and Representatives Names] recognized that and changed it. By making this bill a law – a law that will offer all Americans the same insurance that Congress has, even when they lose a job or get sick – [he/she/they has/have] helped prevent countless health care crises for [state] and other Americans. I thank [her/him/they] for taking this strong and principled stand.

### **From a mother whose child has a pre-existing condition**

Like millions of Americans, the health of my daughter and the financial health of my family may have been saved by the passage of health care reform.

As a single mother of two, I've always put my daughters before myself. When I lost my job due to the economic downturn, I picked up everything and moved to a place with more opportunities and better schools. Unfortunately I had to go it alone to find insurance for my family, and for a brief period we didn't have health insurance.

During that time, my worst nightmare happened. My daughter began to have trouble breathing and we discovered she had pediatric asthma. Now I cannot find insurance that will cover her with this pre-existing condition.

To get the treatment and medication she needs to manage her illness and have a normal childhood, I have cut back on every possible expense, and still come up short at the end of every month.

With the passage of health care reform, she will not be denied because of her pre-existing condition and I will finally be find affordable insurance that will help keep her healthy. No longer do we live in a country that prides itself on the best health care in the world while denying people who really need help access to insurance.

Thanks to the courageous votes of [Senators and Representatives Names], I will have the peace of mind knowing my daughters will get the care they need to grow and thrive, and that our family won't go bankrupt.

### **From a recent college graduate**

Graduating from [UC Berkeley] last May should have been one of my proudest moments. But getting my diploma in the "Great Recession" without a full-time job felt more like falling off the edge of a cliff. My parachute is the passage of health care reform.

Before health care reform, leaving college meant I was no longer covered by my parents' health plan as a dependent. Since my part-time jobs don't offer benefits, I was left to pay hundreds of dollars each month for an individual policy – money that's hard to come by when you're just starting out on your own.

Now that health care reform has passed, I can stay on my family's insurance until I turn 26. I can rest easy knowing that my job status will no longer dictate my health status.

Thank you, [Senators and Representatives Names] for supporting the millions of young Americans like me and voting yes for comprehensive health care reform.

### **From an emergency room physician**

I'm often saddened by the cases that come into the emergency room at [Name of Hospital] in [city, state]. As an ER physician, time and time again I'm confronted with tragedy that I know could have been easily avoided with better care upfront. That's why I'm elated that health care reform has passed, so people can get the care they need early instead of coming to me in critical condition.

National health care reform mandates prevention and wellness benefits, exempting them from deductibles, co-payments and other cost-sharing requirements. Now my patients can see a doctor to manage their diabetes or hypertension without worrying about cost, and they never have to end up on my table with an amputation or a heart attack.

I am so grateful to [Senators and Representatives Names] for voting yes on this legislation. [His/Her/Their] heroic efforts in passing comprehensive reform will save millions of American lives and make my job easier – I will be able to focus on emergency care rather than delayed care.

### **From an insured person who supports reform**

I am one of the lucky people in our country who have good insurance that gives me access to the health care I need at a price I can afford. I know I am no more deserving than my neighbor; I want everyone in my community and my country to have access to quality health care, so I am thrilled with the passage of national health care reform.

Now the elderly couple at my church will be able to afford all of their medications. The single mother who works at my grocery store will have peace of mind knowing that, if she gets sick or her son needs his shots, they can go to the doctor. The small businesses up and down Main Street will be able to keep their doors open, secure in the knowledge that they can afford insurance for their families and their employees that provides real benefits. And, my cousin's child living across the country, who was born with a heart defect, can no longer be denied insurance. Access to quality health care should not be predicated on your income, your health status or where you live.

[Senators and Representatives Names] voted to change the downward spiral of our health care system – fixing it so it will work better for my grandchildren and their children. I thank

[her/him/them] for doing what is right for [her/his/their] constituents and getting the bill to the President.

### **From a doctor with insured patients who can't afford care**

As a physician, I know that what's on the line with national health care reform is much more than elections – it's millions of American lives. Passing a law that helps people rather than grandstanding politics is just what this doctor ordered.

Too often, I've had patients forgo treatments or taking medication because they simply could no longer afford it. These patients are hardworking individuals who have paid for health insurance all their lives. But when they finally needed it – when they suffered injuries or a family member fell ill – they found their insurance plan did not cover nearly enough.

Only comprehensive health care reform can cure these problems. This new law means that insured individuals aren't bankrupted by overwhelming out-of-pocket expenses or lifetime caps. It holds insurance companies accountable for promoting patient care rather than profits.

I thank [Senators and Representatives Names] for doing the right thing by voting for the health care reform America sorely needs.

### **From a state advocate**

As a consumer advocate, I have spent [X] years making sure real people have a voice in the health care debate, and the new health care reform law goes a long way to expand coverage, curb rising health care costs and regulate insurance companies.

I was pleased that [Senators and Representatives Names] stood [her/his/their] ground and made the case for comprehensive reform. The problems America faces are complex, and a “baby steps” approach would simply not make the changes we need.

Based on my experiences working in [STATE] and those of my colleagues across the country, I know that nothing in this new law is radical. Many states have adopted similar policies already, now they will help millions of people.

I know how far we've come. I also know that we must be careful about how these new policies will be implemented. I am committed to continuing the work on health care reform to make sure that consumers are engaged, informed and protected.

Thank you [Senators and Representatives Names], for working with consumers to make sure that their voices were heard when you passed comprehensive health care reform.

### **From small business owner**

As the owner of [business] in [city], I struggled to offer health insurance to my [15] employees. Many of them are just out of college or have young families and work for me because I offer

health insurance. Each year premiums rose, benefits were trimmed, and I didn't have any breathing room to absorb the extra costs. Now that [Senators and Representatives Names] passed health care reform, I will be able to keep my doors open.

The law provides tax credits to small business owners, allowing me to keep offering good health care to my employees and stay in the black without sacrificing growth. The new health care reform is absolutely critical to the success of [business] and the other shops that make our neighborhood what it is. Now we'll be able to continue our climb out of the recession and stay afloat.

I thank [Senators and Representatives Names] for helping make health insurance more affordable for [state] residents and our small businesses.

### **From a nurse practitioner**

As a nurse at [hospital, practice, clinic], everyday I saw people who need and deserve quality health care, but go without. The reasons are many: their employer doesn't offer it, they can't afford to pay, or an insurer has denied them coverage because of something out of their control – having had a C-section or Hay fever can make someone ineligible for insurance.

Health care reform will end these unfair practices and help people get health care no matter where they work. And it will improve the way we deliver care, by investing in community health centers like [name] and primary care, and by rewarding better care instead of just more.

When I was growing up I wanted to be a nurse to care for people. Now that I am, I see that it takes so many more people than just me – in fact, it takes a system, but ours was broken in many places. This new law will fix that system, and help me and others provide better care for the people in our communities. [Senators and Representatives Names] voted yes on a bill that will help millions of people across our country, and will help people like me provide the health care they need.

### **From an advocate to supporters**

As a consumer advocate in [STATE], I have closely followed and participated in the health care reform debate over the last year. I want to thank and commend the many people in our [city or state] who stood up and made their voices heard, in spite of the votes of [Senators and Representatives Names].

In the face of opposition and misinformation, our network of [number] supporters from [state], from all walks of life supported health care reform, knowing what it would mean to our community. They stood up for middle-class families who have seen their financial security wiped out by steep premium increases, unmanageable out-of-pocket costs and crushing medical debt. They stood up for seniors, who get caught in the prescription drug doughnut hole. They

stood up for the most vulnerable people among us, who don't have access to health insurance in [state].

Their efforts to be a part of the health care discussion are to be commended. They know keenly just how important health insurance is to working [state] families. And we will continue to work on behalf of people across [state], to help bring the benefits of health care reform to the members of our community.

SAMPLES