



*Sent via facsimile, email & mail*

AARP New Jersey  
Alliance for Disabled in Action, Inc  
Alliance for Retired Americans  
Alliance for the Betterment of Citizens  
with Disabilities  
Bergen Peace and Justice  
BlueWave New Jersey  
Camden Churches Organized for People  
Cathedral CDC Social Services  
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Trenton  
CDI Head Start Serving Middlesex  
County  
Communications Workers of America,  
District 1  
Communications Workers of America,  
Local 1034  
Communications Workers of America,  
Local 1037  
Elder Rights Alliance  
Family Voices NJ  
First Presbyterian Church, Woodbridge  
NJ  
First United Methodist Church of Beach  
Haven Terrace  
Garden State Equality  
Garden State Spine and Pain Institute  
Gray Panthers of South Jersey  
Health Care For All — New Jersey  
Health Professionals and Allied  
Employees, AFT, AFL-CIO  
Hispanic Directors Association of New  
Jersey  
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Lutheran Office of Governmental  
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National Association of Social Workers  
NJ Chapter  
National Organization for Women New  
Jersey  
New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest  
Law Center  
New Jersey Catholic Conference  
New Jersey Citizen Action  
New Jersey Citizen Action Education  
Fund  
New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute  
New Jersey Policy Perspective  
New Jersey Public Interest Research  
Group  
New Jersey State Conference — NAACP  
New Jersey – West Hudson Valley  
Council Union For Reform Judaism  
New Jersey Working Families Alliance  
Next Step  
South Jersey NOW — Alice Paul Chapter  
Spanish American Social Cultural  
Association (SASCA)  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network  
The Workman's Circle/Arbeter Ring  
Branch 1091  
The Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring  
Women's Fund of New Jersey

December 19, 2008

Dear President-Elect Obama,

As you no doubt heard directly from voters during the election season, families across New Jersey are increasingly anxious about health care and are eager to see the new Administration and Congress keep their pledge to enact reforms that will ensure that everyone in America has access to affordable and stable health insurance coverage and high-quality health care.

With rising premiums far out-pacing wages, everyone is feeling the effects. Family premiums for health coverage have increased 30 percent since 2001, while income has increased just three percent. Businesses that offer health insurance see it in their bottom lines, and family budgets are being strained by rising out-of-pocket costs. For the small businesses that can't offer coverage and individuals who do not have coverage, the possibilities of obtaining coverage grow ever dimmer.

The recent downturn in the economy has compounded these problems. Chief among people's economic worries are the health and well being of their families. They fear not being able to take their child to the doctor or get the medications they need to stay healthy and take care of their loved ones.

Fixing the economy and reforming our health care system must be inextricably linked. Polling data collected prior to the election asked likely voters to rank policy ideas based on how effective they would be at improving the current economic situation, and the top two answers were reducing health care costs and providing health care to all Americans.

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As we move into a new presidential administration and Congress, our leaders must work together to find common-ground policies to provide coverage to all Americans.

We therefore urge Congress and President-elect Obama to make comprehensive health reform the top domestic priority and the one that is tackled first. New Jersey's children, businesses, seniors, people with disabilities and families are counting on action and his leadership.

Sincerely,

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