



September 8, 2009

Open Letter to President Obama and Members of Congress

As our nation's elected leaders, you have an historic opportunity to improve the health and well-being of the American public. On behalf of America's physicians and their patients, we strongly urge you to reach agreement this year on health system reforms that include the following seven critical elements:

- Provide health insurance coverage for all Americans
- Enact insurance market reforms that expand choice of affordable coverage and eliminate denials for pre-existing conditions
- Assure that health care decisions are made by patients and their physicians, not by insurance companies or government officials
- Provide investments and incentives for quality improvement, prevention and wellness initiatives
- Repeal the Medicare physician payment formula that will trigger steep cuts and threaten seniors' access to care
- Implement medical liability reforms to reduce the cost of defensive medicine
- Streamline and standardize insurance claims processing requirements to eliminate unnecessary costs and administrative burdens

The challenges in our health care system are many and complex. Enactment of the above policies will create the foundation for a stronger, better performing health care system, improve access to affordable, high-quality care and reduce unnecessary costs. Further, those who are currently insured, including Medicare patients, and those who are uninsured will all benefit from greater security and stability.

The American Medical Association and our individual members are working hard to improve health care delivery and quality through a broad range of initiatives to promote best practices and reduce unnecessary costs.

We reaffirm our commitment to work with each of you to adopt and implement health system reforms that will benefit all Americans.

Sincerely

J. James Rohack MD