

April 27, 2009

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Health care disparities must be eliminated to achieve a healthy America.

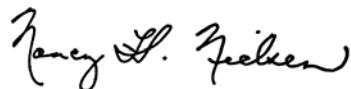
The Commission to End Healthcare Disparities consists of more than 65 medical and health profession organizations and was established to unify efforts to achieve quality care for racial and ethnic minorities. Health disparities increase premature death, escalate health care costs, reduce national productivity and are a moral stain on our nation.

As health care and system reform proceeds, we urge you to ensure that all aspects of reform legislation work toward the elimination of health care disparities. In particular, the following key priorities must be included in any reform plans:

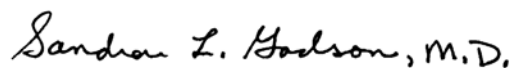
1. Access to high quality health care coverage including a focus on prevention, wellness, chronic disease management and mental health.
2. All health reform proposals should be prospectively assessed for the impact of proposed policy changes on disparities.
3. Demographic and epidemiologic data should be collected throughout the health care system to detect and understand the causes of disparities and focus efforts to eliminate them.
4. Strengthen the health care workforce, increasing both its diversity and cultural competence.
5. Changes to the health care system must be scientifically monitored and evaluated over time with specific regard to their impact on disparities.

The Commission hopes this letter and supporting documents will encourage your team to include these key priorities in health reform. We are committed to the elimination of health care disparities and look forward to working with you on this critically important effort.

Sincerely,



Nancy H. Nielsen, MD, PhD
Co-chair, Commission to End Health Care
Disparities
President, American Medical Association



Sandra Gadson, MD
Co-chair, Commission to End Health Care
Disparities
Past President, National Medical Association

Enclosed, please find the following supporting documents (Appendices)

1. Summary of the Commission's activities over its Five-year Report (2009)
2. Addressing Healthcare Disparities: Recommended Goal, Guiding Principles, and key strategies for Comprehensive Policies (August 2007)
3. List of member organizations
4. DHHS Office of Minority Health's National Standards for Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) in Health Care