



Mary H. Partridge  
Chair

H. James Gooden  
Chair-elect

Stephen J. Nolan, Esq.  
Past-Chair

Christine L. Bryant  
Secretary/Treasurer

Gwendolyn W. Young  
Nationwide Assembly Speaker

Arthur A. Cerullo, JD  
Nationwide Assembly Speaker-Elect

#### NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Charles D. Connor  
President &  
Chief Executive Officer

1301 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Suite 800  
Washington, DC 20004-1725  
Phone: (202) 785-3355  
Fax: (202) 452-1805

61 Broadway, 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10006-2701  
Phone: (212) 315-8700  
Fax: (212) 315-8800

[www.LungUSA.org](http://www.LungUSA.org)

July 15, 2009

The Honorable Henry Waxman  
Chairman  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Joe Barton  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Energy and Commerce  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Waxman and Ranking Member Barton:

As the Committee on Energy and Commerce begins its consideration of health care reform legislation this week, I want to express the American Lung Association's strong support for making prevention and wellness provisions a critical part of health care reform.

The provisions of particular import to the American Lung Association are:

- No cost sharing for preventive services endorsed by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, such as tobacco cessation, and immunizations approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). By eliminating cost-sharing for preventative services and immunizations, these life- and money-saving measures will be more available to the people who need them the most.
- Funding for early detection of chronic diseases such as asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Early detection of chronic diseases will enable prompt treatment – ultimately leading to more fulfilling lives and reduced health care costs for patients. We applaud the inclusion and expansion of the medical home pilot program, which can lead to better treatment and quality of life for patients suffering from chronic diseases.

By setting aside adequate annual funding to invest in prevention and public health investment funds in Division C, this legislation will make tremendous strides towards improving the health of all Americans.

The inclusion of a grant program for the delivery of community-based prevention and wellness services in the legislation is another strong step towards improving the public health of the nation. Tobacco use costs the United States 393,000 lives and \$96 billion in health care costs annually. By giving grants to eligible public and private entities to reduce tobacco use, this bill will help reduce the tremendous costs that tobacco causes and save thousands of lives.

The Lung Association is also excited to see other provisions in the legislation that will make significant strides towards reducing the toll of tobacco use on the United States. Medicaid beneficiaries smoke at a much higher rate than the comparable adult population, 32.6 percent vs. 22.0 percent. Tobacco use costs the Medicaid program billions of dollars each year - \$30.9 billion in 2004. Prohibiting states from excluding smoking cessation treatments as part of their Medicaid coverage will help this disparately affected population to quit and reduce health care costs. However, we urge the Committee to include language requiring comprehensive smoking cessation treatments as recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service's *Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence* guidelines. This will ensure states are helping their smokers quit in the most effective ways, as based on the most recent science.

A central mission of the American Lung Association has been shedding light on lung health disparities in the United States. We are very excited to see a requirement that 50 percent of the community prevention and wellness services grant funds go towards reducing health disparities. This provision, coupled with others related to health disparities will ensure that funds can be more efficiently targeted to areas where they will be most helpful.

The American Lung Association thanks you for including prevention and wellness measures in this health care legislation, and for beginning this journey to reform the entire health care system. With your leadership, all Americans will be able to lead healthier lives and have access to quality, affordable health care when they need it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "CD Connor".

Charles D. Connor  
President and CEO