



AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION®

Fighting for Air

Mary H. Partridge
Chair

October 14, 2009

H. James Gooden
Chair-elect

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Stephen J. Nolan, Esq.
Past-Chair

Dear Mr. President:

Christine L. Bryant
Secretary/Treasurer

Now that all five committees have completed their work on healthcare reform legislation and the process turns towards merging the various pieces of legislation, we are closer than ever before to passing healthcare reform. I wanted to write to you to express the American Lung Association's strong support for a robust prevention and wellness title in the final product.

Arthur A. Cerullo, JD
Nationwide Assembly Speaker

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Charles D. Connor
President &
Chief Executive Officer

At a recent rally in Maryland, you enthusiastically supported prevention and wellness measures, saying that in addition to saving lives, they save money. A recent report by the Trust for America's Health estimated that in 2004 dollars, an investment of \$10 per person per year in community prevention programs will save \$2.8 billion annually in 1 to 2 years, and that savings rises to \$18 billion annually in 10 to 20 years.

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One of the most cost-effective prevention and wellness measures is tobacco cessation. The legislation passed by the committees in Congress takes significant steps towards reducing the toll of tobacco use in the United States. Provisions such as the elimination of cost-sharing for preventive services endorsed by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and the elimination of the exclusion of tobacco cessation medications under the Medicaid program are essential to getting smokers the help they need to quit. The American Lung Association also urges the inclusion of language requiring comprehensive smoking cessation treatments in the Medicaid program 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.

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The inclusion of a trust fund dedicated to supporting prevention and wellness measures is also crucial to successful healthcare reform. This trust fund will provide the funding for a grant program that finances the delivery of community-based prevention and wellness services. 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.

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The American Lung Association thanks you for your support of prevention and wellness measures, and urges to you to work for their inclusion in the legislation that reaches your desk. With your leadership, all Americans will be able to lead healthier lives and have access to quality healthcare when they need it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "CD Connor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first two letters "CD" being particularly prominent and stylized.

Charles D. Connor
President and CEO