



March 6, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell (R-KY)  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan (R-WI)  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer (D-NY)  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)  
House Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

As providers of health care and coverage to hundreds of millions of Americans, we are writing to urge you to move forward with bipartisan legislation to reduce premiums, improve affordability, and improve the individual health insurance market. **We ask that you include this legislation in the omnibus appropriations bill that Congress needs to act upon by March 23.**

Immediate action is necessary to reduce premiums for individuals and families that purchase coverage on their own. We commend the hard work that Republicans and Democrats have done to come together to agree on how to improve affordability. While many promising ideas have been discussed, Americans would most benefit from two critical elements:

- Establishing a premium reduction/reinsurance program to help cover the costs of people with significant health care needs.
- Providing multi-year funding for cost-sharing reduction (CSR) benefits.

According to independent [analyses](#) by Avalere Health and Oliver Wyman, **enacting both legislative provisions could lower premiums by up to 27% in 2019 and increase enrollment and expand coverage to as many as 1.7 million Americans.**<sup>1</sup> In addition, this

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<sup>1</sup> Assuming the reinsurance program was funded at \$15 billion per year, resulting in a net cost of no more than \$5 billion per year (due to savings from reduced tax credit costs).

legislation will help physicians and hospitals better serve the health care needs of patients in their community and lower costs for businesses that provide coverage to their employees.

Establishing a premium reduction program will offset some of the costs that come with caring for individuals with complex health conditions and in greater need of care. Premium reduction could lower premiums for everyone in the individual market while ensuring affordable coverage for those with pre-existing conditions. Similarly, funding CSR benefits would help low-income individuals and families afford needed care by lowering deductibles, copayments and other cost-sharing for millions of consumers.

**Congress has an important opportunity to act and reduce premiums for consumers for 2019, but time is running short.** We urge you to take immediate action to advance bipartisan legislation that includes both premium reduction/reinsurance and funding for CSR benefits as part of the March 23<sup>rd</sup> omnibus appropriations. Let's deliver on the promise to reduce premiums for millions of Americans and their families.

Sincerely,

America's Health Insurance Plans  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Benefits Council  
American Hospital Association  
American Medical Association  
Blue Cross Blue Shield Association  
Federation of American Hospitals  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce