



October 6, 2009

Dear Representative:

As lawmakers in our nation's capital work to tackle the healthcare crisis plaguing our country, the undersigned employers, trade associations and organizations from across the country urge you to remember that our nation's small businesses and the self-employed need meaningful reforms that increase access to quality, affordable healthcare.

As purchasers and consumers of care, we recognize that the skyrocketing cost of healthcare is unsustainable for small business and the country. We must bring down the cost of insurance for small business and their employees. Our organizations share the strong desire to enact necessary insurance market and tax reforms that improve access and affordability for themselves, their employees and their families.

Small businesses are all too familiar with the impact of high healthcare costs. Every day, small business owners across the country struggle to find affordable healthcare, and for many, the most significant obstacle to gaining access to health insurance is cost. Since 1999, health insurance costs for small firms have increased 113 percent. In spite of the increases, it is well-established that employees in our nation's smallest firms pay an average of 18 percent more in health insurance premiums for the same benefits than those in their larger competitors.

In the current economic environment, the small business community is particularly concerned about attempts to advance an employer mandate. For small employers, who the country has historically depended on in steering our economy toward a more productive path, this policy would destroy rather than drive job creation.

Research has shown time and again that mandated employer-paid health insurance is a job killer, plain and simple. It is a highly regressive approach as the uninsured, typically though not always low-income; eventually pay for their own health insurance through job loss, depressed wages and erosion of other benefits. Recent economic modeling indicates that, if enacted:

- A national employer healthcare mandate would generate a net loss of more than 1.6 million U.S. jobs between 2009 and 2013; and
- U.S. real GDP would contract by approximately \$200 billion between 2009 and 2013.

Finally, an employer mandate is unfair to employers and employees because the policy fails to address the real problem facing all employers – the soaring cost of healthcare.

Policies that restrain costs, insurance market reform that increases access to private health insurance and tax reform that provides equity for the purchase of healthcare, provide a policy pathway to successful and sustainable reform. Enacting these common sense and economically sound reforms will achieve what we all agree is necessary – increased access to quality, affordable healthcare.

America’s entrepreneurs have been constructive participants in the healthcare debate and have spent more than a decade voicing the need for reform. We remain committed to the reform effort and urge all lawmakers to develop comprehensive policies that reflect very serious healthcare affordability challenges facing our nation’s small business and self-employed communities.

Sincerely,

Adhesive and Sealant Council  
AGC of Kansas  
AGC of Michigan  
AGC of South Dakota, Inc.  
Alliance of Automotive Service Providers of Missouri (AASP-Missouri)  
Alliance of Visual Artists  
American Bakers Association  
American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Foundry Society  
American Hotel & Lodging Association  
American Rental Association  
American Veterinary Medical Association  
American Wholesale Marketers Association  
AMT - The Association For Manufacturing Technology  
Associated Builders & Contractors  
Associated Equipment Distributors  
Associated General Contractors of Kentucky  
Association of Ship Brokers & Agents  
Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association  
Automotive Parts & Services Association  
Automotive Recyclers Association  
California Funeral Directors Association  
Chesapeake Automotive Business Association (CABA)  
Construction Suppliers Association  
Florida Building Material Association  
Food Marketing Institute  
Gasoline & Repair-Shop Association of New York, Inc  
Independent Electrical Contractors  
Independent Office Products & Furniture Dealers Association  
Indiana/Illinois Tire Dealer Association  
International Foodservice Distributors Association

International Franchise Association  
International Housewares Association  
Iowa Funeral Directors Association  
Kentucky Funeral Directors Association  
Kentucky Funeral Directors Association  
Lumber Association of California & Nevada  
Lumbermen's Association of Texas and Louisiana  
Maine Funeral Directors Association  
Maryland Funeral Directors Association  
Michigan Funeral Directors Association  
Mid-America Lumbermens Association  
Mid-South Building Material Dealers Association  
Missouri Tire Industry Association (MTIA)  
National Association of Community Health Centers  
National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS)  
National Association of Home Builders  
National Association of Mortgage Brokers  
National Association of Uniform Manufacturers and Distributors  
National Association of Theatre Owners  
National Association of Wholesaler-Distributors  
National Burglar and Fire Alarm Association  
National Club Association  
National Community Pharmacists Association  
National Federation of Independent Business  
National Funeral Directors Association  
National Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association  
National Newspaper Association  
National Retail Federation  
National Roofing Contractors Association  
National Utility Contractors Association  
New England Service Station and Automotive Repair Association (NESSARA)  
New Jersey Gasoline-C-Store-Automotive Association  
New York Gasoline & Automotive Service Dealers Association, Ltd  
New York Repair-Shop & Gasoline Dealers Association  
New York State Association of Service Stations & Repair Shops Inc  
New York State Funeral Directors Association  
North American Die Casting Association  
North Carolina Tire Dealers & Retreaders Association (NCTDRA)  
Northeastern Retail Lumber Association  
Northwest Tire Dealers Association (NTDA)  
Ohio Construction Suppliers Association  
Ohio Funeral Directors Association  
Ohio Valley Automotive Aftermarket Association  
Oregon Funeral Directors Association  
Oregon Funeral Directors Association  
Petroleum Retailers and Auto Repair Association of Pittsburgh

PGA of America  
Precision Metalforming Association  
Printing Industries of America  
Professional Photographers of America  
Repair-Shop & Gasoline Dealers Association of Western New York  
Safeguard Business Printing & Promotional Products  
Service Station & Repair Shop Operators of Upstate New York  
Service Station & Repair-Shop Association of Central New York, Inc  
Service Station Dealers of America and Allied Trades (SSDA-AT)  
Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council  
Society of American Florists  
South Carolina Tire Dealers and Retreaders Association  
Southern Building Material Association  
Specialty Equipment Market Association  
SPI: The Plastics Industry Trade Association  
Tennessee/Kentucky Tire Dealers and Retreaders Association  
Texas Tire Dealers Association  
Textile Rental Services Association of America  
The Adhesive and Sealant Council, Inc.  
The Association for Convenience and Petroleum Retailing (NACS)  
The Bowling Proprietors' Association of America  
Tire Dealers Association of Western Pennsylvania  
Tire Industry Association (TIA)  
U.S. Chamber of Commerce  
Virginia Automotive Association  
Washington Maryland Delaware Service Station and Automotive Repair Association  
Wedding & Event Videographers Association International  
West Virginia Funeral Directors Association  
Western Building Material Association  
Western Growers  
Wisconsin Automotive Aftermarket Association (WAAA)  
Wisconsin Retail Lumber Association  
WorldWide Insurance Services, Inc.