

March 2, 2009

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



Dear President Obama:

On behalf of more than 50 million members, employees, and families of our organizations, we thank you for sending a clear message on health reform and long-term financial security in your address to a joint session of Congress Tuesday night and in the FY2010 budget. Peace of mind for “ordinary” Americans means getting affordable health services when their children and parents need care and confidence in their savings and investments. In these times of economic anxiety, Washington must address both our short term crises and long-term challenges. Your actions are important first steps in the policy process to address the overwhelming burden of health care costs on families, businesses, and American competitiveness. Making Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security financially sustainable is essential to our nation’s future fiscal health and the financial well-being of millions of Americans.

We pledge to continue to work in good faith to shape a bipartisan health reform plan that solves the underlying problems in our health care system. We understand the distance between good intentions and legislative action in Washington. There are still many tough choices to be made to protect economic growth, foster medical innovation, and provide access to affordable coverage. We have already been meeting with Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle to craft areas of common ground. And, we promise that we will continue to wrestle with some of the tough choices that must be made to advance these legislative goals.

Over the past two years, Divided We Fail has mobilized 1.6 million Americans and over 100 allied organizations to propel action on health and financial security reform – and those efforts continue today. We will hold events in every state to inform and educate the public and make their voices heard in the legislative process. We will engage these activists to explain the urgency for reform to their neighbors and create a frank dialogue about the trade-offs needed for real change. We welcome an opportunity for your senior staff to brief Divided We Fail allied organizations on your budget and health reform vision. And, we would be pleased to offer tele-town halls or other communication channels for White House representatives to speak directly with Divided We Fail activists.

Again, we applaud your initial steps on health reform and long-term financial security. We look forward to contributing to lasting answers to these difficult challenges.

Sincerely,

Bill Novelli
CEO, AARP



John Castellani
President, Business Roundtable



Business Roundtable®

Dan Danner
President and CEO, NFIB



The Voice of Small Business.

Andy Stern
President, SEIU



Stronger Together