



August Recess Talking Points

- Health care reform is far too important to be dragged down by divisive political rhetoric from Washington, DC.
- Health plans have been working in support of bipartisan health care reform for three years. Our community has proposed guaranteed coverage for pre-existing conditions, discontinuing rating based on a person's health status or gender, and a personal coverage requirement to get everyone into the system. We have proposed far-reaching administrative reforms to slash paperwork, reduce medical errors, and ensure doctors and hospitals can focus on patient care.
- Health plans strongly believe that now is the time for comprehensive, bipartisan health care reform that enhances affordability, improves quality, covers all Americans and puts the health care system on a sustainable path.
- However, we also share the concerns that employers, providers, and patients have raised about the significant unintended consequences of a new government-run plan. A government-run plan would dismantle employer-based coverage, thereby violating the shared commitment to ensure that those who like their current coverage can keep it. The government run plan would also add significant liabilities to the federal budget.
- We need a uniquely American approach to health care reform that builds on what is working in the current health care system. Health plans are committed to this process and will work with policymakers to enact reform this year.
- Our community has offered a comprehensive health care reform proposal that includes a complete overhaul of market rules and new consumer protections to ensure that every American has guaranteed access to affordable, portable health care coverage and that all Americans participate in the system.
- Health plans also are fully committed to advancing cost containment and administrative simplification so that our health care system is put on a sustainable and fiscally responsible path.
- As we work toward the shared goal of simplifying health care choices, it is crucial to develop an architecture with workable rules that ensures broad participation of health plans, makes available a variety of coverage options, and avoids

duplicative regulation that makes it harder for working families and small employers to afford coverage.

- Health care reform needs to ensure that patients continue to benefit from health plans' programs that improve quality and safety, advance evidence-based care, and promote affordability.
- Congress has taken an important first step in the process and demonstrated its strong commitment to enact health care reform this year.