

**America's Health
Insurance Plans**

601 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
South Building
Suite Five Hundred
Washington, DC 20004

202.778.3200
www.ahip.org



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 13, 2006

Contact:

Robert Zirkelbach
202-778-8493

Americans Urge New Congress to Focus on Health Care

New survey finds bipartisan support among Americans for key elements of AHIP access plan

[Survey of American Adults Regarding Universal Health Care Coverage](#)

[Universal Coverage Survey Memo](#)

(Washington, DC) – Americans believe access to health care should be the top domestic priority when the new Congress convenes next year, a new survey released today finds.

The poll also signaled to lawmakers and state legislators that Americans across the political spectrum would rally around the elements of a detailed plan put forth by America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP) today to provide access to more than 40 million Americans.

Conducted by Ayres, McHenry & Associates, Inc. and The Glover Park Group on behalf of AHIP the survey found that 80 percent of adults want Congress and state legislatures to do more to extend access to coverage.

While Americans express broad support for a stronger health care safety net, a commanding majority of Americans favor reforms that build on the current public-private system rather than implementing a new government-run system.

"Americans across the political spectrum are saying that government should take action to improve access to health care coverage, but they do not support a one-size-fits-all approach," said Dr. Whitfield Ayres, President of Ayres, McHenry & Associates. "Promoting access to health care coverage is an issue Americans agree on regardless of party or ideology."

"Voters clearly want Congress to find a way to promote access and to ensure the government devotes the resources necessary to help working families get the coverage they need," said Joel Johnson, Partner with The Glover Park Group.

The survey found strong support for key elements of the AHIP access plan including strengthening the health care safety net, enabling all consumers to purchase health insurance with pre-tax dollars, providing



Page 2

financial assistance to help working families afford coverage, and encouraging states to develop and implement access plans.

Highlights of the poll include:

- 77 percent of Americans support increasing funding for a health insurance program for children from low-income families that would be paid for by the federal and state governments.
- 69 percent support expanding the Medicaid program for the poor to cover all adults, including single adults, who make less than the federal poverty level.
- 65 percent support establishing a new tax-free health account for all Americans which could be used to buy any type of private health insurance.
- 69 percent support giving a federal tax deduction for money paid by individuals to purchase private health insurance.
- 85 percent support giving a tax credit to any low- and moderate-income parents who can show that their children are covered by health insurance.
- 71 percent support providing incentive grants from the federal government to encourage states to develop programs to provide health insurance coverage for the uninsured.
- 63 percent support modifying the current system rather than replacing the current system with a government-run health care system.

To learn more about AHIP's reform proposal, please visit <http://www.americanhealthsolution.org>.

###

America's Health Insurance Plans – Providing Health Benefits to More Than 200 Million Americans