

NATIONAL CAUCUS OF NATIVE AMERICAN STATE LEGISLATORS

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF REFORM OF THE HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEM

The National Caucus of Native American State Legislators (NCNASL) is made up of American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian State Legislators from 18 states and is organized to provide a forum for discussion, education and increased communication. Additionally, the NCNASL identifies and proposes legislation and administrative actions to eliminate barriers to achievement of a better quality of life for Native people.

WHEREAS Native populations have been negatively impacted by the lack of adequate affordable health care in their communities; and

WHEREAS in spite of the ongoing trust responsibility of the United States to provide health care for American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, our communities are highly susceptible to falling through the cracks in the current system; and

WHEREAS Native populations have significant health disparities; and

WHEREAS heart disease and cancer are the leading causes of death among American Indians and Alaska Natives; and

WHEREAS Native Hawaiians are 2.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes than non-Hispanic white residents of Hawaii of similar age; and

WHEREAS the infant mortality rate for American Indians and Alaska Natives is 1.7 times higher than the non-Hispanic white rate; and

WHEREAS infant mortality is 60 percent higher for Native Hawaiians than for whites; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan would prevent insurance companies from covering preventive care so that illness and disease could be prevented instead of just treated afterward when it's too late and more expensive; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan would put a cap on what insurance companies can require an insured person to pay in out-of-pocket expenses and deductibles and eliminate yearly and life-time limits on how much insurance companies cover if a person gets sick; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan would create a new health insurance exchange so that people can easily compare insurance plans, prices and performance to decide which quality affordable insurance option is right for them; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan would ensure that each person always has guaranteed choices of quality, affordable health insurance even when there is a loss of job, a change of jobs, or illness; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan would create a competitive public insurance option that will allow individuals to benefit from increased competition that holds insurance companies accountable; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan would prevent insurance companies from denying a person health insurance because of a pre-existing health condition, and prevent them from dropping a person's coverage in the case of illness or charging more because of health or gender; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan would provide credits and assistance to working families to make sure they can afford quality coverage and to small businesses so they can offer competitive affordable rates to their employees; and

WHEREAS the Administration's plan will greatly assist Native Americans who do not have access to the Indian Health Service (IHS) or the Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems (NHHCS) or in situations where the IHS or NHHCS cannot provide adequate health care services because of lack of funds; now,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE NATIONAL CAUCUS OF NATIVE AMERICAN STATE LEGISLATORS that the inherent sovereignty of Tribes as recognized through historical treaties and legal relationships that exist between Tribal Nations and the United States of America is undeniable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Caucus of Native American State Legislators joins the Administration, Congress and the broad range of stakeholders who support and are committed to help establish a health care system in America that seeks to improve access to affordable and cost effective health care services to all Americans.

Sponsored by: Rep. John McCoy (WA)

Approved date is: September 25, 2009

Committee of Jurisdiction: Health and Wellness Committee

Certified by Committee Chair: Rep. Mele Carroll (HI)

Certified by Caucus Chair: Rep. John McCoy (WA)

Ratified certified by: The NCNASL, September 25, 2009

Distribution List: **Members of Congress**
Administration