

STAND FOR QUALITY
in Health Care

June 17, 2009

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
Chairman
Senate Health, Education, Labor, and
Pensions Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Comments on the Senate HELP Committee's Affordable Health Choices Act

Dear Senator Kennedy:

Stand for Quality, a coalition of more than 180 organizations focused on improving the quality and affordability of health care, commends you and the Senate HELP Committee for including in the Affordable Health Choices Act specific proposals for improving quality measurement.

We are heartened that the proposed quality provisions in the Affordable Health Choices Act builds on many of the recommendations our coalition set forth in March 2009 in *Building a Foundation for High Quality, Affordable Health Care: Linking Performance Measurement to Health Reform*. We believe that reform should build on the momentum that has been generated by public-private collaborative activities already underway to promote improvement in health care quality and affordability. By building on current activities to create a sustainable infrastructure to support and improve the nation's capacity to set priorities for quality improvement, develop measures, and establish efficient data collection processes, we will improve care, lower costs, and achieve our shared goal of making high quality, affordable health care available to all.

Stand for Quality appreciates your call for expanded public support for coordinating priority setting, developing new measures and mechanisms to assure that measurement is a constructive tool to foster quality improvement, and ensuring consultative processes to engage the full range of stakeholders in the use of measures for payment or public reporting. We look forward to working with you on a few issues – such as (1) determining the extent to which funding for the respective elements of the measurement and improvement enterprise is provided by way of appropriations or designated funding from the Medicare Trust Fund and (2) supporting a multi-stakeholder input and consensus-based process for reviewing the national strategy for the collection of performance information which builds on existing efforts – that we believe warrant additional clarification.

We applaud your leadership on health reform, and look forward to working with you in the weeks and months to come. If have you any questions, please feel free to contact any of the Steering Committee members.

Sincerely,

Stand for Quality Steering Committee

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