

# **NPAF** National Patient Advocate Foundation

**The Patient's Voice** | *since 1996*

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University of Texas  
MD Anderson Cancer Center

November 6, 2009

The Honorable John Boehner  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Minority Leader Boehner:

On behalf of the patients we represent, National Patient Advocate Foundation would like to express our deep concerns with your substitute amendment to the "Affordable Health Care for America Act." National Patient Advocate Foundation believes that all health care reform proposals must acknowledge and include the complete elimination of preexisting condition exclusions and waiting periods in order to protect and provide meaningful access to health coverage for patients with preexisting conditions. Approximately 35 percent of all adults and 20 percent of school-aged children have at least one chronic condition that may be considered a preexisting condition.

The National Patient Advocate Foundation is a national non-profit organization which strives to provide the patient voice on issues relating to improving access to, and reimbursement for, high-quality, affordable healthcare. Our companion organization, the Patient Advocate Foundation (PAF), provides professional case management services to patients with chronic, debilitating or life-threatening conditions. Last year, PAF received 9,505,534 contacts for information, and 48,369 patients received professional case management services. Since 2006, PAF has aggressively tracked and documented the barriers that currently exist in our health insurance system for those with preexisting conditions. From 2007 to 2008, PAF saw a 146% increase in the number of cases related to preexisting condition denials and waiting periods.

In addition to the data and real life stories that illustrate how important the elimination of preexisting conditions is in health care reform, numerous health care stakeholders (including insurers, provider groups, and pharmaceutical/biotechnology companies) have pledged their support for the elimination of preexisting conditions. Without the elimination of preexisting conditions, patients will continue to be denied insurance coverage or be forced to wait for necessary care. As we work to improve our health care system, the elimination of preexisting conditions must be a non-negotiable, non-partisan requirement.

We urge you to support health care reform legislation that places the needs of patients first and includes the complete elimination of preexisting conditions. We

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pledge our willingness to help in any way we can to realize enactment of comprehensive health care reform legislation, including the complete elimination of pre-existing condition exclusions, as rapidly as possible in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,



Nancy Davenport-Ennis  
President and CEO  
National Patient Advocate Foundation

Cc: Minority Whip Eric Cantor