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**Statement from Mark Blum, America's Agenda Executive Director,
on President Obama's Health-Care Address**

Encourages Policymakers to Reach Consensus this Year; Prioritizes Cost Reduction, Access to Quality and Affordable Care, Prevention of Chronic Disease, Patient Choice and Personal Responsibility

WASHINGTON (September 9, 2009) – America's Agenda, a bipartisan organization of businesses, labor unions and government leaders, issued the enclosed statement following President Obama's address to a joint session of Congress:

"After months of spirited conversation and debate, it is time to move forward a broadly supported, pro-growth health-care reform package that reduces costs, helps prevent chronic disease, preserves patient choice, encourages personal responsibility, and, most importantly, ensures quality and affordable care for all Americans," said Mark Blum, executive director of the organization.

"We commend President Obama and leaders in Congress for their ongoing efforts on an issue that affects every American taxpayer, regardless of age, race, gender, profession, or income and we continue to work side by side with policymakers to help make meaningful health-care reform a reality. With our nation's economy at a turning point, it is critical that Congress enact the right set of policies by the end of this year."

A recent voter survey released by America's Agenda showed that a majority of voters in both parties agree on the need to move forward with key health reform policies to improve quality and control costs. Nearly two-thirds of voters think that the current health care system needs a complete overhaul or major reform.

Moreover, voters agree across the political spectrum on key elements of reform. There is broad understanding that surging increases in chronic disease is a major driver of health costs, for example. Sixty-three of voters support eliminating co-pays and deductibles that discourage patient utilization of medically prescribed treatment for chronic disease.

"Americans want a solution and the President made a compelling case for it tonight," said Blum. "All of the components for a bipartisan agreement have been put on the table. Every Member of Congress now has an extraordinary opportunity to choose what's best for the American people in the long term."

For more information, visit www.americasagenda.org.

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