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America's Agenda Calls on Policy Makers To Maintain Momentum on Health Care Reform

WASHINGTON (October 13, 2009) – *America's Agenda: Health Care for All*, a bipartisan organization bringing together businesses, labor unions and government leaders to achieve quality, affordable health care for all Americans, today acknowledged Senate Finance Committee action on health care reform and called on policymakers to accelerate momentum toward passage of health reform this year.

"It's time for Congress to build on the momentum of moving a reform bill out of the Senate Finance Committee," said Mark Blum, Executive Director of *America's Agenda*. "The bill passed today is incomplete, but contains many consensus components which policymakers from both sides of the aisle can rally behind. Still, if we don't continue progress toward effective health reform this year, the consequences for American families and businesses are dire. Health care costs will skyrocket, the level of care will diminish and we will leave tens of millions of people uninsured or at risk of losing coverage."

After passage of health reform legislation in the Finance committee, *America's Agenda* urged lawmakers to take further steps to promote higher quality care and attack aggressively the root causes of health care inflation by assuring better coordination of care among doctors, patients and health care providers. Fragmentation of care and lack of continuous support for patients in prevention and management of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer are a major reason for soaring costs in the current health system. A recent survey commissioned by *America's Agenda* shows 75 percent of voters back a measure to provide their primary care or family doctors with the support of a coordinated team of allied professionals, including nurse practitioners, nutritionists and preventive care specialists.

"Today's vote provides a platform for Congress to integrate other important health care objectives, including establishing community-based health teams to ensure patients receive a high level of care in the key times between doctor visits," Blum continued. "90% of prevention and treatment of chronic disease is self-administered by patients outside the doctor's office, but patients need support to care for themselves effectively. Community-based health teams are a much-needed, cost-effective solution to filling in gaps in patient care that lead to costly medical errors, failures in management of chronic diseases, and avoidable illness, hospitalization and death."

Founded in 2004, *America's Agenda* has actively built and strengthened comprehensive health-care reform campaigns in states across the country. The organization's campaigns have provided templates for federal legislation and won passage, in states like Vermont and West Virginia, of some the most far-reaching health reform legislation enacted, to date, anywhere in the country.

About America's Agenda

America's Agenda brings together U.S. businesses, national and international labor unions and government leaders who share a common commitment to achieving access to affordable, high-quality health care for every American

For more information, visit www.americasagenda.org.

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