July 28, 2009

The Honorable Max Baucus United States Senate 511 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

#### Dear Chairman Baucus:

Thank you for all of your efforts to achieve the critical reforms needed in health care. We know it is an enormous undertaking and appreciate the intensity of what you have before you. As you and your colleagues craft the long needed reform of our health care system, our organizations believe strongly that these reforms should be as inclusive as possible.

As you near completion on a health reform bill in the Finance Committee, we urge you to treat legal immigrants the same as you treat everyone else by removing all waiting periods in public health insurance programs for all legal immigrants, including them equitably in the subsidy structure and ensuring affordable health care for all children.

We share your goal of expanding the number of individuals who have affordable health insurance and reducing the number of uninsured in America. This means we must ensure lawfully present residents have equal access to subsidies and low income immigrants are not excluded from Medicaid because of the five year waiting period. The current waiting period in Medicaid is particularly unfair because the immigrants subject to the waiting period pay the exact same taxes as citizens. Earlier this year, thanks in no small part to your leadership, Congress eliminated the 5-year waiting period that prevented legal immigrant children from having affordable health care in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). We urge you to take the next steps in restoring fairness by mandating the inclusion of legal immigrants, including children and adults, so that Medicaid is available to all legal immigrants on the same basis as citizens. This is an issue of fundamental fairness, and voters across the political spectrum strongly support allowing legal immigrants to use the programs their taxes pay for.

We also urge you to make all immigrant children and pregnant women, without regard to their immigration status, eligible for Medicaid on the same basis as citizens. This is not only the right thing to do, it will save money over time by ensuring these residents have access to preventive care and rely less on expensive emergency room care. Universal coverage should include our most vulnerable.

All Americans deserve health care they can afford. We simply cannot afford half-measures and unfair exclusions in health reform that leave out millions of Americans.

The following organizations urge you to take these actions to ensure we are achieving truly responsible health reform that does no harm.

Sincerely,

**Regional/National** 

Community Catalyst Northeast Action

Northwest Federation of Community Organizations

Campaign for Community Change

**Gamaliel Foundation** 

Fair Immigration Reform Movement

Service Employees International Union

National Immigration Law Center

National Korean American Service and Education

Consortium (NAKASEC) National Council of La Raza National Health Law Program

One America

Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas en

Norteamérica (COFEM) Coalition on Human Needs

**ACORN** 

American Academy of Nursing

American College of Nurse-Midwives

American Federation of Government Employees

Local 3937, AFL-CIO

American Psychological Association

Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum Association of Asian Pacific Community Health

**Organizations** 

Association of the Clinicians for the Underserved Association of Farmworker Opportunity Programs

Association of Reproductive Health Professionals Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

Center for Reproductive Rights

Children's Defense Fund Children's Health Fund

Coalition for Asian American Children & Families

Community Action Partnership

Commissioned Officers Association of the U.S.

Public Health Service

Council on Social Work Education

Families USA First Focus

Friends Committee on National Legislation General Commission on Religion and Race, The

United Methodist Church

Heartland Alliance for Human Needs & Human

Rights

**HIV Medicine Association** 

Hmong National Development, Inc.

Institute for the Advancement of Social Work

Research

Japanese American Citizens League Laotian American National Alliance

La Union

League of United Latin American Citizens

Little Sisters of the Assumption U.S.A. Province

Main Street Alliance Maternity Care Coalition

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the

Good Shepherd

National Alliances of Vietnamese American Service

Agencies

National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental

Health Association

National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum

National Employment Law Project

National Institute for Reproductive Health

National Council of Jewish Women

National Federation of Families for Children's

Mental Health

National Institute for Latino Policy

National Latino Behavioral Health Association

National Network for Arab American Communities

National Network of Abortion Funds

National Organization for Women

National Partnership for Women & Families

National Women's Health Network

NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby

Out of Many, One

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Polonians Organized to Minister to Our

Community, Inc

Raising Women's Voices for the Health Care We

Need

**RESULTS** 

**RESULTS Education Fund** 

South Asian Americans Leading Together

United Neighborhood Centers of America

Union for Reform Judaism

United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness

Ministries

U. S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Voices for America's Children

Western Center on Law & Poverty

American College of Obstetricians and

Gynecologists

American Civil Liberties Union

9to5, National Association of Working Women

#### Alabama

Alabama Coalition for Immigrant Justice

# **Arizona**

Ecumenical Chaplaincy for the Homeless

#### **Arkansas**

Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families

LULAC Council 754 and

Reform Immigration FOR America Campaign

The Christian Alliance

#### California

California Partnership

Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los

Angeles (CHIRLA)

Coastal Alliance for a United Sustainable Economy (CAUSE)

Justice Overcoming Boundaries in San Diego (JOB)

Korean Resource Center (KRC)

Asian Pacific American Legal Center of Southern

California

Asian Women's Shelter

California Pan-Ethnic Health Network

California Latinas for Reproductive Justice

California Primary Care Association

Human Agenda

International Institute of the Bay Area Having Our

Say

Korean American Family Service Center

National Council of Jewish Women, California

North East Medical Services

School of the Americas Watch, Chapter L.A.

Services, Immigrant Rights, and Education Network

Visión y Compromiso

9to5 Bay Area

Los Angeles 9to5

#### Colorado

Colorado Progressive Coalition

Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition

Colorado Progressive Action

Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and

Reproductive Rights

The Interfaith Alliance of Colorado

9to5 Colorado

#### Connecticut

Connecticut Citizen Action Group

Citizens for Quality Sickle Cell Care, Inc.

Greater Hartford Legal Aid

New Haven Legal Assistance Association

People of Faith

### **Florida**

Florida Immigrant Coalition

Catholic Charities Legal Services, Archdiocese of Miami

Children's Services Council of Broward County
Farmworker Association of Florida
Florida Immigrant Advocacy Center
Hispanic Coalition, Inc
Pax Christ Northeast Florida
Social Justice Ministry of Cathedral Basilica of St

## Georgia

Augustine

Atlantans Building Leadership for Empowerment (ABLE)

Cobb Immigrant Alliance

Center for Pan Asian Community Services, Inc.

Georgia Latino Alliance for Human Rights

OCA Georgia Chapter

Georgia Rural Urban Summit

SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Health

Collective

Atlanta 9to5

#### Hawaii

Faith Action for Community Equity (FACE) Domestic Violence Action Center Kokua Kalihi Valley Comprehensive Family Services

#### **Idaho**

Idaho Community Action network

#### Illinois

Gamaliel Metro Chicago

Korean American Resource and Cultural Center (KRCC)

Pilsen Neighbors Community Council South Suburban Action Conference AIDS Foundation of Chicago

## **Indiana**

Immigrant Task Force Middle Way House, Inc

## <u>Iowa</u>

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement Quad City Interfaith

#### **Kansas**

Westside Community Action Network Center

### Kentucky

Sisters of Charity of Nazareth Central Leadership

## Maine

Maine Peoples Alliance

Maine Center for Economic Policy

#### Maryland

Casa de Maryland

Maryland Women's Coalition for Health Care

Reform

Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach

#### Massachusetts

Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy

Coalition (MIRA)

Massachusetts Jobs with Justice

**MassVOTE** 

Service Employees International Union

Massachusetts State Council U.F.C.W. Local 1445

Health Care for All

Alliance to Develop Power (ADP)

Family Health Center of Worcester, Inc

Greater Boston United for Justice with Peace

Coalition

Lowell Community Health Center

Ibis Reproductive Health

Massachusetts Citizens for Children

Massachusetts WIC Nutrition Program

South Cove Community Health Center

The Disparities Solutions Center at Massachusetts

General Hospital

Irish Immigration Center

# **Michigan**

Michigan Organizing Project
Arab Community Center for Economic & Social
Services (ACCESS)

### **Minnesota**

**ISAIAH** 

Catholic Charities' Office for Social Justice Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs Pax Christi Northwest Minnesota

#### Missouri

Metro Organization for Racial and Economic Equity (MORE2) Metropolitan Congregations United Adorers of the Blood of Christ

Center for Immigrant Healthcare Justice

George M Melby, Pastor Institute for Peace & Justice

**Intercommunity Housing Association** 

Bengal Enterprises, LLC Parenting Life Skills Center

#### Montana

Montanans for Health Care

# **Nebraska**

Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest

Lutheran Metro Ministry, Omaha

### New Hampshire

New Hampshire Citizen's

#### **New Jersey**

National Council of Jewish Women, New Jersey State Public Affairs Committee New Jersey Immigration Policy Network Results, Central New Jersey Domestic Group St. Anthony's Social Justice Group, St. Anthony of Padua Church Student Government Association, Raritan Valley Community College

#### **New York**

Alliance of Communities Transforming Syracuse (ACTS)

VOICE- Buffalo

Citizen Action of New York

Make the Road New York

**Building Movement Project** 

Center for Independence of the Disabled Commission on the Public's Health System

Community Healthcare Network

Community HIV/AIDS Mobilization Project

Community Journal Legal Defense & Education

Fund

**Empire Justice Center** 

Foundation for Religion and Mental Health

Global Justice Ministry

Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition

Hispanics United of Buffalo

Korean Community Services Metropolitan New

York. Inc.

La Fuente: NYCPP and LICPP

Latino Commission on AIDS

Metropolitan Community Churches

New York Immigration Coalition

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Northern Manhattan Perinatal Partnership, Inc

North Fork Spanish Apostolate

Office of Justice and Peace, Sisters of Charity of

New York

Project CHARGE (Coalition for Health Access to

Reach Greater Equity)

RACCOON, Inc

Reproductive Health Access Project

Society of Jesus, New York Province

South Asian Council for Social Services

Western New York Health Care Campaign

### **Nevada**

Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada

# **North Carolina**

CARE

Latin American Coalition Western Carolina Community Action

## **New Hampshire**

New Hampshire Citizens Alliance

### **New Mexico**

New Mexico Center on Law and Poverty

#### Ohio

Asian Services In Action, Inc. Justice and Witness Ministries Ohio Empowerment Coalition

#### Oregon

CAUSA, Oregon's Immigrant Rights Pineros y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN) Bend-Condega Friendship Project The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organizati

#### Pennsylvania

HIAS and Council Migration Service Pennsylvania Council of Churches

#### **Rhode Island**

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Ocean State Action

#### **South Carolina**

South Carolina Fair Share

#### **South Dakota**

South Dakota for Health Care Solutions

#### **Tennessee**

Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition ETSU Language and Culture Resource Center

### **Texas**

Healthcare for All Texas-Austin

## **Vermont**

Vermont Public Interest Research Group Vermont Public Interest Group

# Virginia

Tenants and Workers United Virginia Organizing Project New Bridges Immigrant Resource Center

# **Washington**

Washington Community Action Network Lutheran Public Policy Office Northwest Health Law Advocates Parents Organizing For Welfare and Economic Rights Statewide Poverty Action Network United Food and Commercial Workers Local 21 WA Chapter American Academy of Pediatrics

#### Washington, D.C.

National Capital Immigrant Coalition The Women's Collective

#### Wisconsin

Voces de la Frontera 9to5 Milwaukee