

Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce

HEALTHCARE AND WELLNESS

The Loudoun County Chamber recognizes the importance of the healthcare industry to the economy and the community. The Chamber supports maximum flexibility to encourage business to provide the best health insurance options for employees in the free market system. In addition, the Chamber supports appropriate federal and state reimbursement levels that allow primary care providers, specialists, and hospitals to care for patients and reduce the displacement of costs to those who are privately insured.

The Chamber is extremely concerned about the impact of federal healthcare reform legislation on the business community and urges careful consideration of the impact of any further policy changes or regulations developed in this arena. We remain concerned about the regulatory burdens placed on businesses as well as the negative impact the lack of predictability has on the health care market and the economy.

The Chamber supports legislation that stabilizes the insurance marketplace and ensures access to affordable and stable group health insurance for all businesses, including sole proprietors and businesses with few employees, as well as individuals. The Chamber supports legislation that reduces state burdens and provides tax incentives to help small businesses offset the staggering increases in health insurance costs, including incentives that encourage participation in “consumer-driven” healthcare and wellness plans. The Chamber also supports initiatives that: improve quality and lower costs; encourage fair regulation of the insurance market; maintain a robust healthcare insurance marketplace for consumers; expand the use of healthcare data and technology to improve treatment and the patient experience; create an emphasis on prevention, wellness, and personal responsibility; and promote pay-for-performance.

The Chamber also recognizes the important role of behavioral health and substance abuse treatment services in creating and maintaining a healthy workforce. The Chamber supports increased resources dedicated to delivering innovation and improvements to the mental health delivery system that enables individuals and families to access preventative, community-based non-emergency services, while also ensuring the care, safety and support of persons experiencing a mental health crisis. The Chamber also

supports efforts to greater leverage private-sector providers in addressing behavioral health needs in the community.

On the issue of Medicaid, the Chamber believes that the following principles should be thoughtfully considered and included in an ultimate solution to reforming Medicaid and increasing coverage of Virginia's working uninsured population.

The General Assembly and the Governor should agree to a plan that provides healthcare coverage to the working uninsured population of Virginia through a public-private, managed care approach. This plan must enable Virginia to access increased federal funds and provide for:

- Competition;
- Personal responsibility for costs among new enrollees;
- Care coordination;
- Incentive payments based on health quality outcomes; and
- Other incentives for innovative health care delivery and healthy behaviors.

All new federal funds should be directed to this public-private, managed care model, as opposed to the current Medicaid program, with any surplus funding to be deposited into a separate designated fund.

In addition, the plan must protect the Commonwealth's financial sustainability by providing a sunset that automatically dis-enrolls/drops the new enrollees that came with expansion, should the federal government not follow through on its financial commitment of 100 percent funding in years 1-3, gradually reducing to 90 percent in the years after.

Finally, the Chamber believes that the current Medicaid system is in need of continued reform. While some steps have been taken to this end, an outside independent audit of Virginia's current Medicaid system must be implemented to identify areas to reform and achieve savings to ensure the taxpayers' dollars are being spent as efficiently as possible. Continued reform and the audit should happen concurrently with increasing coverage of Virginia's working uninsured population.

The Chamber supports collaborative efforts between healthcare stakeholders, including providers, purchasers, insurers and consumers, to ensure continued innovation, creativity and transformation in

the healthcare marketplace. In addition to the priorities noted above, the goals of these efforts should also include the following:

- Effective communication and education of the many changes in the healthcare laws and marketplace to create an informed consumer;
- Expansion of healthcare infrastructure (both inpatient and outpatient) to meet community needs;
- Increase in the supply of well-trained health personnel;
- Enhanced quality, choice, unbiased data transparency, and diminished redundancies and waste in healthcare and
- Appropriate planning for emergency preparedness and public-private partnerships to address pandemic preparedness and support for a robust volunteer Medical Reserve Corps.

The Chamber supports efforts to protect and expand services offered by safety net healthcare providers so all Loudoun's residents have access to healthcare.