October 1, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boehner
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Boehner:

We are writing to express our support for your efforts to reform our nation's health care system. As the chief executives of our states and territories, we realize that the status quo is no longer an option and we support getting health reform done this year.

Sky-rocketing health care costs hurt families, force businesses to cut or drop health benefits and cause already strained state budget deficits to significantly grow. We believe reform can relieve these burdens by reining in costs and making coverage more affordable, both for our citizens and our state budgets.

Efforts at the federal level, like the recent and critical investments through the Recovery Act that support states' HIT and prevention initiatives, are beginning the work to lower health care costs. Our citizens and our states, however, will only achieve the health care security and stability they need if we succeed in working together with the Congress and the President to achieve health care reform.

We commend you and your colleagues for provisions included in your bills that will help states and territories. Many of the provisions will allow states and territories to achieve long term savings and help cover those who currently go without health coverage. We recognize that health reform is a shared responsibility and everyone, including state governments, needs to partner to reform our broken health care system.

We thank you for your leadership in this historic effort and look forward to continuing to work together to get health reform passed this year.

Sincerely,

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm
Michigan

Governor John Baldacci
Maine

Governor Theodore R. Kulongoski
Oregon

Governor Pat Quinn
Illinois

Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr.
Virgin Islands

Governor Mark Parkinson
Kansas

Governor Timothy M. Kaine
Virginia

Governor Martin O'Malley
Maryland

Governor Christine O. Gregoire
Washington

Governor Steven L. Beshear
Kentucky

Governor Jim Doyle
Wisconsin

Governor David A. Paterson
New York

Governor Chester J. Culver
Iowa

Governor Bill Ritter, Jr.
Colorado

Governor Jack Markell
Delaware

Governor Joe Manchin III
West Virginia

Governor Bill Richardson
New Mexico

Governor Jon S. Corzine
New Jersey

Governor Deval Patrick
Massachusetts

Governor Ted Strickland
Ohio

Governor Edward G. Rendell
Pennsylvania

Governor Brian Schweitzer
Montana