

# National Conference of State Legislatures:

## Health Reform Policy

Adopted July 2009 by a vote of 38 states to 11

### EXCERPTS OF POLICY ADOPTED

The National Conference of State Legislatures joins the Administration, Congress and the broad range of stakeholders who support and are committed to help establish a health care system in America that seeks to improve access to affordable and cost effective health care services to all Americans...

The NCSL supports a federal initiative for comprehensive health care reform that provides affordable insurance to all Americans...

- It **should include a public insurance option** side-by-side with commercial insurance for those for whom private insurance is not the best option...
- Recognizing the importance of shared responsibility, it should **guarantee health insurance regardless of medical condition**, and insure affordability through a sliding scale **based on ability to pay**...
- It should **recognize that the states are partners in the implementation of any comprehensive national health care program** and have already invested significant funds to expand access to, and improve the quality of, health care. States should not be penalized financially for their past actions to guarantee access to affordable, quality health care in the absence of federal programs or policies; and
- It **should not preempt state policies** that go beyond the federal "floor..."

The current economic situation has highlighted the fragility of the existing Medicaid funding arrangement. Despite the substantial infusion of federal countercyclical assistance over the past few months, states continue to struggle to maintain their existing Medicaid programs. The inclusion of a **statutory countercyclical stabilizer in the health reform package is a priority** for NCSL...

NCSL supports the elimination of the five-year waiting period for Medicaid-eligible legal immigrants...

It is **essential that state insurance commissioners play a key role in the regulation of insurers** and in protecting the consumer. Finally, NCSL opposes requirements for states to "pay" to maintain existing mandated benefits. States that have greater protections in place should be grandfathered. No individual should lose protections due to federal reform...

NCSL **supports efforts to address health disparities** and agrees that data collection is an important element. We are particularly supportive of the proposed financial assistance to states to assist with this effort. Language Access Services - NCSL is also very supportive of increased efforts to provide language access services and believes that an enhanced Medicaid match for these services is appropriate. We also think it is equally important to have these services available in private plans.