

# National Medical Association

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# NMA Supports Health Care Reform

- Supports Health Care Reform
  - Universal Coverage that may include a single payer system
  - A focus on wellness care and prevention
  - Support for diversity in the healthcare workforce
  - Support of Cultural and Linguistically appropriate competency in the health care system
  - Education about and simplification of the health care system

# NMA Supports Health Care Reform

- ◎ Always support universal access/coverage for ALL
  - Supported Medicare when other physicians did not
  - 1966 Medicare bill was enacted
    - 1883 German national compulsory health insurance program enacted
    - **1916** Congressional hearings on health insurance. **December.** American Medical Association (AMA) Social Insurance Committee, headed by Dr. Alexander Lambert, recommends compulsory, State-run health insurance.
    - **1920** AMA House of Delegates reverses position, declaring itself in opposition to Government health insurance.

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- **1943 January.** President Roosevelt, in his state of the Union message, calls for social insurance "from the cradle to the grave."
- **1947 May 19.** President Truman, in another special health message to Congress, again requests a National Health Program. S. 1320 introduced by Senators Wagner and Murray; Senator Taft's bill also reintroduced (S. 545).
- **1954 January.** President Eisenhower proposes "re-insurance" measure, embodied in H.R. 8356 and S. 3114. Hearings in both houses.
- **1962 May 20.** President Kennedy addresses the Nation on the Medicare issue in a speech televised from Madison Square Garden.  
**May 22.** AMA's Dr. Edward Annis gives televised reply.

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- 1966 Medicare bill was enacted
  - **1963 February 21.** President Kennedy sends special message to Congress on problems of the aged. Slightly revised King-Anderson bill (H.R. 3920 and S. 880) reintroduced the same day.
  - **November.** Hearings in Ways and Means Committee on King-Anderson bill interrupted by assassination of President Kennedy.
  - **1964 January.** Ways and Means Committee completes hearings.
  - **February 10.** President Johnson sends special message, "Health of the Nation," to Congress, advocating Medicare.
  - **July 27-28.** Conference committee report is passed by House and Senate, respectively.
  - **July 30.** Medicare (as part of the Social Security Amendments of 1965) signed into law by President Johnson



# NMA Supports Health Care Reform

Wellness Care and Prevention is part of our mission since 1895

## NMA Mission Statement:

To advance the art and science of medicine for people of African descent through education, advocacy and health policy and **to promote health and wellness**, eliminate health disparities, and sustain physician viability.

# NMA Supports Health Care

## Reform

- Diversity of the Workforce
  - NMA represents some 46,900 physicians of African descent; 880,000 physicians in the U.S.
  - African Americans remain less than 5.5% of the physician population; while African Americans are 14% of population
  - Benefits of Diverse workforce
    - Minorities tend to service the communities they came from (poor, uninsured and underinsured)
    - Positive patient response to therapy from doctors who look like the community they serve
    - Cultural competence and linguistically appropriate approaches (written, verbal and media exchanges) occur

# NMA Supports Health Care Reform

- Education about the appropriate use of the health care access being given
  - Emergency Rooms are not the site for Primary Care at 3 a.m.
  - Encourage a Medical Home (not =nursing homes)
    - A site for coordination of care with a primary care physician (Peds, IM, FM or OB/GYN)
  - Immunizations perhaps through school based clinics (staff by pediatricians/nurses)
  - Businesses encouraging employees to take time (and giving them time) to exercise, eat nutritiously, and visit doctors regularly, as needed

# NMA: Supports Health Care Reform—the message

- If you like your insurance you get to keep it
  - Without fear of losing it because you used it
  - Without escalating “out of pocket” cost (co-pays)
  - Without concern about the donut hole in prescription costs (pt pays after \$2500/yr)
- If you lose your jobs or change jobs, you are still covered (portability becomes a reality)
- If you don't have insurance, you can get it
  - No concerns about high premiums because of pre-existing conditions
  - This provides Affordable, quality care with wellness and preventive services covered

# NMA Supports Health Care Reform

Physicians Need help with HCR legislation in the following areas:

- Funding for HIT for small physician offices
  - Start up costs and Maintenance
- Placement of minority physicians on commissions, residency review boards, advisory committees to give more diversity among specialties and attention to health disparities in all aspects of medicine (not just primary care).
- Improved reimbursement for all doctors, especially those disparately paid in indigent communities, historically.
- Tort Reform

# NMA Supports Health Care Reform

- **No permanent repeal of the sustainable growth rate (SGR) system**
- Authorities granted to an Independent Medicare Commission
- Mandatory participation in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Physician Quality Reporting Initiative
- **Payment reductions for physicians identified as high-resource users**
- **Enrollment fees for physicians participating in Medicare and Medicaid**
- Budget neutral financing for primary care bonus payments
- Elimination of Stark self-referral exemptions for physician-owned hospitals



# NMA Supports Health Care Reform

**NOT GETTING  
EVERYTHING IS  
NEVER A GOOD  
ARGUMENT FOR  
DOING NOTHING!**