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**For Immediate Release**

**National Medical Association Applauds President Obama for Convening the White House Forum on Health Reform**

March 5, 2009, Washington, DC...The National Medical Association (NMA) congratulates the President and his staff for ensuring that all the pertinent voices were heard in today's forum. The NMA is committed to remaining engaged with the White House, Congress, the consumer advocacy community, and other stakeholders, to ensure that the momentum for healthcare reform results in meaningful legislation that the President can sign before the Congress adjourns for the August recess.

"The President has generated a palpable level of optimism that health care reform can pass both the House and Senate this year", noted Dr. Carolyn Barley Britton, President of the National Medical Association (NMA).

"All of us will have to give up something, but if we work through our differences we all win," added Dr. Niva Lubin-Johnson, the Chair of NMA's Board of Trustees, and a practicing internist in Chicago.

"We cannot build a strong nation on the backs of sick people", said Dr Akhter, Executive Director. "Time is not on our side", continued Dr. Akhter, emphasizing the urgency of passing meaningful healthcare reform legislation this year.

"We all received our marching orders today", concluded Dr Britton.

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*Founded in 1895, the National Medical Association is the nation's oldest and largest medical association representing the interests of more than 30,000 African-American physicians and their patients. The NMA has repeatedly advocated for policies that would assure equitable and quality health care for all people.*