



ACNM Health Reform Update

July 31, 2009

As this update is being prepared, the House Energy and Commerce Committee is considering amendments to H.R.3200, the health reform legislation that is making its way through the legislative process in the U.S. House of Representatives. This committee is the third to consider the bill in the House. ACNM is very pleased that H.R.3200 ensures maternity benefits as a minimum benefit of all health coverage plans, guarantees equitable reimbursement for certified nurse-midwives under the Medicare program, provides for recognition of free standing birth centers, provides for enhanced Medicaid payments to primary care providers (to include nurse-midwives), and other important provisions relating to the delivery of health care services to women.

Two committees in the U.S. Senate are working on health care reform legislation. The Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee worked throughout June and July to produce legislation on health reform that addresses insurance reform, public health and workforce issues. The Senate Finance Committee is still in the midst of bipartisan negotiations that address tax issues, Medicare and Medicaid programs. ACNM has been working hard to garner support for Senator Kent Conrad's (D-ND) legislation to provide for equitable reimbursement for midwives under Medicare. As of today, 25 Senators support his important legislation, S.662.

It appears that neither the House nor the Senate will be able to act on health care reform legislation prior to Congress' scheduled August break. ACNM encourages members to push both House and Senate members to return to Washington in September to enact meaningful health reform legislation.

Please stay tuned for further alerts and updates.