



## California School Health Centers Association

October 13, 2009

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama,

As health reform legislation moves forward, the California School Health Centers Association urges you to ensure that strong provisions for community prevention are included in the legislation.

Community prevention enables the health care system to run more effectively by reducing the burden on emergency departments, clinical and in-patient care. School-based health centers (SBHCs) play an important role in a community's efforts to keep its children healthy. Preventive care, such as immunizations and well-child checks, helps students avoid health-related absences and get the support they need to succeed in the classroom. SBHCs and other community prevention programs are especially important for children who are the most vulnerable and least likely to obtain care through a traditional health care delivery system.

Both the Senate HELP Committee's *Affordable Health Choices Act* and the House Tri-Committee's *America's Affordable Health Choices Act* would establish Community Transformation Grants to address the community level factors that support health and equity. This program should be maintained in the bill in order to support community efforts to engage in quality prevention. The bills establish a Prevention and Public Health Fund to make sure that health reform not only improves health care access and quality but also invests in improving America's health. These bills also include the establishment of a National Prevention and Wellness Strategy, which signals high level inter-agency commitment to supporting communities that foster health and equity.

School-based health centers, and other community prevention initiatives, play an important role in ensuring that all children, regardless of circumstance, are able to reach their fullest potential. We urge you to communicate your support for meaningful prevention provisions, including Community Transformation Grants, a National Prevention and Health Promotion Strategy, a Prevention and Public Health Fund and school-based health centers, with Congressional leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Serena Clayton".

Serena Clayton, PhD  
Executive Director