

October 18, 2017

The Honorable Paul D. Ryan
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
House Minority Leader
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Speaker, Leader McConnell, Leader Pelosi and Leader Schumer:

We urge Congress to quickly pass legislation to stabilize our private health insurance markets and make quality health insurance more available and affordable. Senators Alexander and Murray have negotiated in good faith and developed a bipartisan agreement that will help achieve these goals. Their legislation deserves a vote by the House and Senate.

Federal law requires insurers to provide discounted cost-sharing for lower income Americans. With the elimination of federal payments for the cost sharing reduction program, insurers are faced with significant financial losses, which could force them to withdraw from the marketplace, or, in some states, request significant rate increases.

The Congressional Budget Office warned that the president's action would increase premiums by 25 percent by 2020 and leave some Americans without any insurers in the nongroup market— all while driving up the national debt by nearly \$200 billion. The timing of the termination – days before open enrollment begins – is sowing confusion among consumers and leaving states scrambling to develop solutions to stabilize their insurance markets.

Stabilizing insurance markets is one of the primary areas where Congress can take action to ensure that consumers have affordable health care options. As governors, we deal with the real-life impacts of actions taken in Washington, DC. With heightened uncertainty at the federal level, many of our states have worked hard to ensure that every part of each of our states has insurers willing to offer plans on the individual market. We have explored, designed, and implemented programs to help keep costs from spiraling out of control.

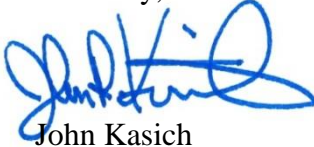
That is why Congress should, at a minimum, fund cost-sharing reduction payments through 2019.

We urge Congress to work with states to make reforms that will preserve and expand gains in coverage, while controlling costs for consumers. Earlier this year, Governors from both sides laid out a framework to help stabilize the individual markets. We are encouraged that the

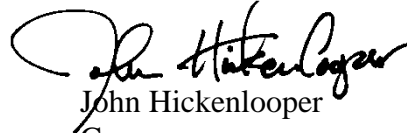
Senators' agreement contains many of the elements that Governors identified as important to stabilizing the market, providing choice for consumers and making insurance more affordable.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to improve the American health care system.

Sincerely,



John Kasich
Governor
State of Ohio



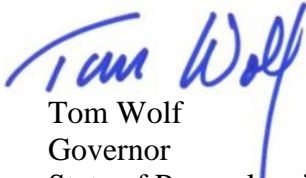
John Hickenlooper
Governor
State of Colorado



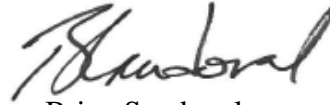
Steve Bullock
Governor
State of Montana



Bill Walker
Governor
State of Alaska



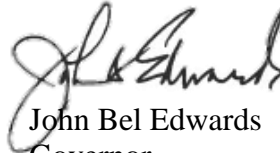
Tom Wolf
Governor
State of Pennsylvania



Brian Sandoval
Governor
State of Nevada



Terence R. McAuliffe
Governor
State of Virginia



John Bel Edwards
Governor
State of Louisiana



Charles D. Baker
Governor
State of Massachusetts



Phil Scott
Governor
State of Vermont