

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS

COMMITTEE ON
THE BUDGET

SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON AGING

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-4607

November 18, 2016

Attendees, Health Care Symposium
“Health Reform: Where Are We; Where Are We Going”
Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Attendees:

I wanted to congratulate the University of Virginia Center for Health Policy and Powers Law for hosting this timely health care symposium, “Health Reform: Where We Are; Where We are Going.” Access to affordable health coverage will continue to be a central issue for Congress going into 2017 and a new administration. Now, more than ever, we need to protect the gains we have made in insurance coverage while continuing to find improvements that lower costs and improve care.

Because of the ACA, millions of children can remain on their family's health insurance until they are 26 years old and insurance companies are prohibited from denying care to those with pre-existing conditions. Seniors can receive free preventive care that will help reduce the cost and incidence of chronic diseases and purchase more affordable prescription drugs. Millions of American women now have access to preventive health services. Small businesses are eligible for tax credits to help defray the costs of purchasing insurance for their employees. And insurance companies are required to rebate excess premiums to their customers. These measures represent just some of the positive effects of ACA, and need to be protected.

There is no question we also have more to do to lower health care costs while improving the quality of care. Other nations have shown it can be done through promoting preventive care, effectively using technology, paying our health care providers by patient outcomes, and finding ways to reduce defensive medicine and lower malpractice premiums without taking rights away from patients.

Controlling the cost of health care is essential to reducing the deficit. I am ready to work with anyone interested in finding smart savings in health care, including the Medicare program. Inaction is not a solution to our problems. There are many good ideas for improving our health care system and through common ground and compromise, we can find credible solutions.

I will continue to work on improving the ACA and reducing the cost of health care for Americans into the next Congress, and look forward to many productive discussions on health reform like the one you are holding today.

Sincerely,



Tim Kaine