

Public Policy Update

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Congress Continues Health Care Reform Negotiations

Although the loss of a filibuster-proof majority in the Senate stalled pending health care reform legislation, which included a new home visitation grant program and a provision simplifying Medicaid coverage of nurse home visitation, recent activity indicates that Congress continues to negotiate health care reform legislation. The President has scheduled a bipartisan health care reform summit for Thursday, February 25, that marks a significant attempt to reach consensus on health care reform legislation. In anticipation of the summit, President Obama recently unveiled a revised health care proposal that includes modifications to the Senate and House-passed health care reform bills. Although the President's proposal does not specifically mention the home visitation provisions, the Administration and Congressional leaders have indicated that the revised plan builds on the Senate-passed health care reform bill, and therefore includes the Senate version of the [home visitation grant program](#). Based on current intelligence, the Congress is considering the following options to move forward with health care reform:

- **House passage of the Senate-passed health care legislation** – This approach is contingent on Congressional Leadership reaching an agreement to correct problematic provisions in the Senate legislation through Budget Reconciliation. While this scenario would ensure passage of the home visiting grant program at \$1.5 billion, Congressional support of the existing health care reform bills is uncertain. Any action through Budget Reconciliation would be required by September 30, 2010.
- **Congressional passage of pared-down health care legislation** – This approach would only include high priority, popular, and bipartisan-supported provisions that are essential to health care reform, such as extending health insurance coverage to the uninsured or anti-trust provisions that promote competition among health insurers, leading to more affordable health insurance coverage. Because home visitation may not be deemed essential to health reform, neither the grant program nor the Medicaid Option would likely be included.

The NFP National Service Office will continue to advocate for **BOTH** the home visitation mandatory grant program and the Medicaid Option for States to simplify reimbursement of nurse home visitation services as part of health care reform legislation. We remain committed to supporting these complementary provisions to the extent that one provision does not come at the expense of the other. In the event that Congress fails to pass health care reform legislation, NFP Policy & Government Affairs staff will pursue alternative legislative vehicles and administrative avenues for greater funding for home visitation through grant and Medicaid funding.

YOU CAN HELP! Now is the time to weigh-in with your Congressional delegation. Click [here](#) to take action to support Nurse-Family Partnership and the home visitation provisions as part of health care reform.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact:

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You can also view legislation and advocacy materials on our public policy webpage at www.nursefamilypartnership.org.