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## **Leading Coalition of Business and Labor Leaders Voices Opposition to Proposed Health Plan Excise Tax**

*America's Agenda: Health Call for All Cites Negative Implications for Care Quality, Middle-Class Working Families*

**Washington, D.C. (January 12, 2010)** - *America's Agenda: Health Care for All*, a leading coalition of business and labor organizations, submitted a letter today to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi expressing strong opposition to the proposed excise tax on higher-cost "Cadillac" health plans included in HR 3590, the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act*:

"It would be a tragic irony if, after Congress has achieved such unprecedented progress toward enacting federal health reform, the excise tax on so-called 'Cadillac' health plans contained in the Senate bill were to adversely impact American families and businesses, particularly when we need to be doing more to help them weather the recession," wrote a group of 12 national business and labor leaders representing the organization.

The appeal from *America's Agenda* cites findings backed by the Joint Committee on Taxation that taxing these plans would incentivize employers and employees to opt for lower-quality health plans. Such plans would hand citizens a cost burden of higher deductibles and more out of pocket expenses, and serve as an obstacle to preventative medical services at a time when 75 percent of national health spending is linked to largely preventable chronic diseases. Additionally, many of the current high-cost health plans that would become taxed are tied to the employment of older or sicker workers - vulnerable members of society who need relief most.

"Imposing an excise tax on employee health benefits – one that will increase the cost of coverage, reduce the quality of care, and target the most vulnerable, middle class Americans – is not the kind of health reform Americans deserve. We can – and must – do better," wrote the national business and labor leaders.

Founded in 2004, *America's Agenda* has actively built and strengthened comprehensive health-care reform campaigns in states across the country. The organization's campaigns have provided templates for federal legislation and won passage, in states like Vermont and West Virginia, of some the most far-reaching health reform legislation enacted, to date, anywhere in the country.

To read the letter to Senator Reid and Speaker Pelosi in its entirety, visit [www.americasagenda.org](http://www.americasagenda.org).

### **About America's Agenda**

*America's Agenda* brings together U.S. businesses, national and international labor unions and government leaders who share a common commitment to achieving access to affordable, high-quality health care for every American.

For more information, visit [www.americasagenda.org](http://www.americasagenda.org).

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