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## **America's Agenda Applauds Senator Baucus, PhRMA and President Obama on Health Reform Funding Agreement**

*“Major milestone on the road to enacting comprehensive health care reform this year”*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a statement issued today, *America's Agenda: Health Care for All* President Doug Dority said, “The agreement reached by the America's pharmaceutical research and manufacturing companies, the Senate Finance Committee and the White House is a major milestone on the road to enacting comprehensive health care reform this year that will guarantee affordable, high quality health care for all Americans.”

The agreement by pharmaceutical companies to contribute \$80 billion toward reduction in health care costs will be written into health care reform legislation being drafted by the Senate Finance Committee chaired by Max Baucus. The savings will include a 50 percent reduction in the cost of brand name medicines for millions of seniors whose annual payments for medication fall between \$2,700 and \$6,153.75 under the Medicare Part D drug benefit program.

“America's Agenda applauds the leadership of Senator Baucus, PhRMA, and President Obama that led to this landmark agreement,” said Dority. “By making the first significant direct contribution to reducing the costs of health care, the pharmaceutical industry has demonstrated its commitment to overcoming challenges to passing real and effective health care reform legislation this year.”

At a meeting with President Obama last month, health care industry leaders pledged to do their part to reduce health spending by \$2 trillion over the next 10 years. PhRMA is the first member of the group to reach an agreement with the White House and Congress on an industry-wide contribution to health care cost reduction.

“America's Agenda is proud that one our own members, PhRMA, has set a standard for the kind of shared responsibility that will be required of leaders across the entire health industry,” said Dority.

PhRMA Vice President for State Government Affairs Jan Faiks, who serves on the America's Agenda Board of Directors along with national and international labor union presidents, business CEOs and health care leaders said, “I want to thank America's Agenda for its continuous encouragement of the kind of constructive dialogue that led to this landmark agreement between our companies, Senator Baucus, and the White House. Comprehensive health care reform is essential for strengthening our economy, and it is profoundly important to working families,

businesses, patients and their loved ones. Our companies are proud to help lead the way with this important step forward toward reforming health care this year.”

America’s Agenda Executive Director Mark Blum said, “The open question, now, is: Will other major health industry players step up to the plate and meet the shared responsibility standard set by PhRMA?”

“The agreement reached for creating savings in the costs of medicines is a very important beginning to containing overall growth in health costs that is key to guaranteeing affordable coverage for all Americans,” said Blum. “To reach this goal, critically important delivery system reforms must be enacted that will generate broader savings within other components of our broken health care system.”

Essential health care delivery reforms, outlined in America’s Agenda’s recently released [\*Bipartisan, Consensus Approach to Health Care Reform\*](#), include a national investment in disease prevention, cost-saving coordination and improvement in treatment of chronic diseases that account for 95 percent of Medicare health spending and 75 percent of overall national health spending, strengthening of our primary care delivery system, alignment of patient and provider incentives to adopt evidence-based best practices in medical care, and elimination of wasteful administrative costs.

“We have a lot of challenges ahead,” said Blum. “Now is the time for other leadership in the health care industry to demonstrate the same willingness to share responsibility for fixing America’s health care that was just shown by PhRMA.”

#### *About America’s Agenda*

America’s Agenda brings together national and international labor unions, businesses, and government leaders who share a common commitment to achieving guaranteed access to affordable, high-quality health care for every American. America’s Agenda has an unrivaled record of success in winning enactment of far-reaching state health care reforms through campaigns the organization has designed and guided based on common ground interests shared by business and labor. America’s Agenda recently launched a series of high-profile “Summit Conversations on American Health Care for the 21st Century” that explore the emerging consensus among national leaders of business, labor, health care, and government regarding health care reform. The Summit Conversations are hosted by national leaders like former HHS Secretary Donna Shalala, Congressman Dick Gephardt, and Governor Tommy Thompson, and moderated by Emmy Award-winning commentator Bill Press. Visit America’s Agenda online at [www.americasagenda.org](http://www.americasagenda.org) and watch previous Summit Conversations at [www.summitconversations.org](http://www.summitconversations.org).