



Cancer Action NetworkSM

May 10, 2006

Dear Senator:

We write today on behalf of the American Cancer Society's Cancer Action NetworkSM (ACS CAN) to once again express our strong opposition to S. 1955, the Health Insurance Market Modernization and Affordability Act of 2005. It is our view that the basic construct of this legislation is fatally flawed and therefore we ask you to oppose it regardless of any amendment process on the Senate floor.

It has been reported that a Senator may offer an amendment that would protect insurance guarantees that are currently in place in 26 states. While we sincerely appreciate efforts to mitigate the damage this bill would cause, such amendments do not fully redress the flaws in the legislation and consumers would still be at risk of losing important cancer-related protections such as guaranteed insurance coverage of colorectal cancer screenings and clinical trial participation.

All state-required patient protections, not just those related to cancer screenings and care, are important. They are crucial to public health as whole, safeguarding access to a broad array of vital benefits. While we support the noble goal of increased access to health insurance, jeopardizing currently afforded protections for cancer care and other life saving health screenings is not an acceptable solution. Furthermore, it is our view that S. 1955 will not result in increased access to quality care for most people. S. 1955, in any form, is not a silver bullet to solve the problem of the uninsured.

As an alternative, ACS CAN does support S. 2510, the Small Employers Health Benefits Program Act, as a way to increase access to health insurance without sacrificing state-enacted protections. Should it come before the Senate as an amendment to S. 1955, we encourage your support for this legislation as a way to lower the cost of health insurance without jeopardizing crucial patient protections already in place.

Thank you for taking cancer patients and their families, along with all Americans at risk of cancer, into consideration in making your decision on S. 1955. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us or Jaimie Vickery, Senior Federal Representative (202-661-5720).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel E. Smith".

Daniel E. Smith
National Vice President
Federal and State Government Relations

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy K. D. Selig".

Wendy K. D. Selig
Vice President
Legislative Affairs