

**IBC statement on the House passage of health care reform
March 22, 2010**

Legislation passed last night by the House begins to address the urgent need to reform our nation's health care system. Independence Blue Cross strongly favors comprehensive reform and believes that every American, regardless of health or economic status, should have the peace of mind that comes with having health insurance coverage. In fact, a number of the key provisions in the legislation are changes we have been advocating in Pennsylvania for years, such as eliminating exclusions for pre-existing conditions.

While this historic legislation has taken progressive steps to expand access to health insurance to many who have not been covered, unfortunately it does not do enough to address the underlying problems that are causing the cost of health care to increase at twice the rate of inflation.

As the country moves into implementing reform, it's time to focus on making coverage affordable for consumers by attacking the primary cost drivers, such as higher priced medical technology, more costly drugs, and the increased use of health services due to a rise in chronic illness. And it's also important to slow the growth of health care costs by emphasizing wellness and preventive care and by aligning incentives to improve health care quality and efficiency.

For 71 years, Independence Blue Cross has focused our efforts on the health and well-being of our customers and the community. We will continue to work closely with all of our stakeholders in health care as we prepare for the changes that lie ahead.