

## HEALTHCARE POLICY

### ACS POSITION

Access to affordable health insurance is a major hurdle for Americans and American businesses as the 21st century unfolds. It is not only the direct cost that both large and small businesses and individuals must bear, but indirect effects as well. Complexity and uncertainty give rise to a system that inappropriately overshadows and often stifles the ability of industries and individuals to succeed, innovate, pursue entrepreneurship or other career or business options, or even retire.

The American Chemical Society (ACS) believes that the ability to maintain the health of the nation's workforce and their families is paramount in maintaining America's global competitiveness. It is the ACS's position that association healthcare plans (AHP) can address some of these issues; however, AHPs are not an all-encompassing solution to the healthcare problem that society faces.

The ACS and its more than 154,000 members in the chemical professions are in a unique position to comment on the healthcare debate, not only as consumers, but as providers, innovators, and contributors to the nation's health and well-being. Our members are professionally and actively involved in

- Drug discovery and development
- Diagnostics
- Monitoring food, water and environment
- Materials for medical and health applications
- Health and wellness education
- Workforce training

Preserving the innovation, creativity, and institutional knowledge that reside in the modern American pharmaceutical and chemical industries needs to be an important underlying concern of any healthcare reform legislation. The future health of the nation and the world rests within this system. Yet the environment surrounding healthcare must change to encourage entrepreneurial businesses and individuals to make choices that are based on the ability to contribute, grow and succeed, and not on the availability or lack of an affordable healthcare plan.

To that end, the ACS encourages the consideration of the following points in any federal legislation regarding healthcare:

- Prevention—incentives to lower health care costs by practicing wellness, safety and preventive care
- Availability and affordability—choice of affordable health plans and doctors
- Eligibility—eligibility for all, regardless of any pre-existing conditions
- Portability—ability to move across state lines and between employers without loss of coverage

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The American Chemical Society is a non-profit scientific and educational organization, chartered by Congress, with more than 154,000 chemical scientists and engineers as members. The world's largest scientific society, ACS advances the chemical enterprise, increases public awareness of chemistry, and brings its expertise to state and national matters.

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