

*The following is a statement from eight attorneys general who joined together in signing an amicus brief filed in the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit on January 21, 2011 regarding the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act.*

Feb. 4, 2011

The Affordable Care Act is making a difference in the lives of millions of people in our states and it is poised to help even more as it continues to be implemented. Under the federal health reform law, millions of Americans now have access to free preventive care. People with pre-existing medical conditions who have struggled to find health insurance coverage will have to struggle no more. Insurers are required to cover them. Parents are now able to keep their children on their health insurance plans up to the age of 26. Senior citizens are receiving help to buy the prescription drugs they need. Small businesses are eligible for health insurance tax credits so that they can provide insurance to their employees. The list goes on. Whether people agree about all aspects of health care reform, we should be able to agree that for a lot of people, life has gotten better since the law was enacted and millions more will continue to benefit from the Affordable Care Act as it is fully implemented.

Of course, comprehensive health care reform is complex and people are still debating its implications. The legal challenges to the requirement that Americans buy health insurance are still in their initial stages. Twelve federal judges have already dismissed challenges to the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act and two federal judges have ruled that the law is fully constitutional. Although a judge in Florida recently ruled that one provision of the federal health care law is unconstitutional, we believe the judge's ruling is incorrect and we applaud the decision by the U.S. Department of Justice to appeal it. We are confident that the constitutionality of the entire law will be upheld on appeal and ultimately by the United States Supreme Court. In the meantime, the numerous health care reforms provided in the federal health reform law will continue to be implemented to the benefit of all Americans.

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