

U.S. Workplace Wellness Alliance



1015 18TH ST., NW, SUITE 300
WASHINGTON, DC 20036
(202) 833-0009
FAX (202) 833-0113
[HTTP://WWW.USWWA.ORG](http://www.uswwa.org)

September 25, 2009

The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
United States Senate
Room 513 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Carper:

The U.S. Workplace Wellness Alliance ("Alliance") strongly supports your efforts to increase support for employer-site worksite wellness programs during the Finance Committee consideration of the "America's Healthy Futures Act." We are a broad-based national organization of businesses, health care advocates, and nonprofit organizations dedicated to the vision that a healthier U.S. workforce produces a stronger and fiscally healthier U.S. economy. Your leadership in gaining Chairman Baucus' support for a \$200 million workplace wellness grant program for small business represents an important step towards increasing the availability and access to workplace wellness programs.

The rising cost of health care poses a serious threat to the competitiveness of U.S. business and to our nation's economy. Nearly 60 percent of employers' after-tax profits are spent on corporate health benefits compared to 7 percent just three decades ago. Worksite wellness programs among large businesses have been shown to be an effective way to reverse this trend and bring down health care costs in tangible ways for both employers and employees.

A new grant program at the Department of Health and Human Services targeted at small businesses will help promote employer investment in evidence-based strategies for improving the health of workers by addressing causes of chronic disease. Employer wellness programs are a win-win for both the employee and the employer. Healthy employees are more productive because they are absent less often, and are more focused on their tasks. Worksite wellness programs can reduce sick leave absenteeism by an average of 28 percent.

We urge all Members of the Senate Finance Committee to support this new program and work to assure that it is retained when the Finance Committee bill is merged with provisions from the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee's "Affordable Health Choices Act."

Please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

U.S. Workplace Wellness Alliance Steering Committee

*-American College of Preventive Medicine -National Business Coalition on Health
-American Heart Association -Partnership for Prevention
-American Hospital Association -UPS
-The Dow Chemical Company -U.S. Chamber of Commerce*