

For Immediate Release

*Amanda Barney (401) 946-7887 ext. 111
amandab@hari.org*

Hospitals Urge Meaningful Health Care Reform

CRANSTON, R.I. – Sept. 9, 2009 – Tonight, President Barack Obama will address a joint session of Congress on his vision for health care reform. Hospitals in Rhode Island have actively participated in and monitored the national debate on this important issue, and remain committed to comprehensive and meaningful health reform that expands coverage to all Rhode Islanders. Working toward this goal, hospital leaders have had ongoing discussions with the state’s congressional delegation, urging a plan that provides all patients with access to needed health care services.

“Our hospitals work every day to provide quality care for all patients, but also see first-hand the impact of our nation’s broken health care system. The end result—patients with no access to primary or preventative care are coming to the hospital without insurance; they are sicker and often with chronic conditions that makes providing care more complicated and more costly,” said Edward J. Quinlan, president, Hospital Association of Rhode Island. “While there is still much work to be done in Washington, all stakeholders – insurers, suppliers, unions, employers, providers and individuals - must step forward and do their part if we are going to achieve meaningful reform. Additionally, it is critical that any health reform bill be based on expanding coverage to at least 95 percent of the population and must ensure that our hospitals remain strong and able to provide care to patients and communities.”

Hospitals in Rhode Island and throughout the nation are also urging consideration of:

- Appropriate payment for services to hospitals – hospitals in our state presently receive 90 percent of costs for caring for our elderly. Rhode Island has the fifth highest concentration of elderly in the nation.
- Recognition of medical liability costs created by “defensive medicine”
- Individual and employer responsibility
- Commitment to primary care

Founded over a half century ago, the Hospital Association of Rhode Island is a statewide trade organization that assists member hospitals in effectively meeting the health care needs of Rhode Island, through advocacy, representation, education and services. HARI members work collaboratively to improve the quality of care delivered and address issues threatening access to health care including increasing health costs, workforce shortages and decreasing reimbursement. HARI members work together to ensure that all Rhode Islanders will receive comprehensive, high quality health care.

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