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Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-218 Capitol Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Obey,

We are writing to urge you to include \$75 million in funding for the State High Risk Pool Grants Program for the fiscal year 2011 appropriations for the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure this important program continues to provide coverage for hundreds of thousands of Americans. We strongly believe that this crucial safety net program should continue to be fully funded, even with the enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). Communicating for America played a major role in establishing the first High Risk Pool in Minnesota in 1976 and in the other 34 existing state pools. We feel that the State High Risk Pool Grant Program will continue to play an important role in providing care to some of the country's most vulnerable people until full implementation of the health reform legislation, when individuals enrolled in the program can transition into new state-based exchanges that will offer guaranteed health insurance coverage to individuals and small businesses.

We appreciate and support the request of \$55 million in funding that President Obama sent to the Speaker, however we believe full funding of \$75 million will allow more Americans to access this program who would otherwise be unable to obtain health insurance.

Existing risk pools in 35 states help an estimated 207,000 Americans receive health insurance who are otherwise unable to secure such coverage because of pre-existing conditions. High risk pools have served as the last resort for some of our nation's sickest and those who are medically uninsurable due to serious conditions. We urge you to include \$75 million in funding for the State High Risk Pool Grants Program for the fiscal year 2011 appropriations for the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure this important program continues to provide coverage for hundreds of thousands of Americans.

Sincerely,  
Wayne Nelson  
CA President  
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