



Communicating for America 2013 Legislative Priorities and Action Plan

Health Care and Tax Policy

CA will work to ensure that implementation of the Affordable Care Act enables CA members and all self-employed and small business employees access to affordable health insurance options **both** inside **and** outside the newly created state and federal insurance exchanges. CA will promote ideas that put affordable health insurance options within reach of self-employed individuals and small business owners and their employees.

CA will advocate for the following policies:

- Health insurance exchange navigators should include associations and organizations with experience in meeting the needs of self-employed, small business and rural consumers.
- Affinity and trade organizations should continue to be allowed to offer health insurance plans to its members.
- State health insurance exchanges should include competition among insurers and choice for consumers. CA will work to assist and educate those purchasing their own insurance of their options both inside and outside of the exchange.
- CA will continue to advocate for a continuation of state-based risk pools for those who have had a medically uninsurable condition, thus reducing the likelihood of adverse selection in state-based exchanges in post-2014 health insurance markets.
- CA will support achieving a permanent 100 percent tax deduction for all individuals paying for their own health insurance and advocate simplifying tax laws relating to health insurance coverage and promoting fairness
- CA will promote the important services agents and advisors provide to individuals and small business owners and advocate for incentives to strengthen their role in the marketplace, both inside and outside the exchanges, including support for legislation that excludes agent compensation from the MLR calculations.
- CA will encourage all states to provide balanced competition through the continuation of small and regional health insurance providers and community health plans.

Agriculture and Immigration Policy

CA will work for comprehensive immigration reform that strengthens the health of the US economy as well as the vitality of rural communities and American agriculture. CA will support and advocate legislation that includes effective border enforcement, increased efficiencies in current guest worker programs, and a 'firm but fair' way to deal with those who are already here.

- CA supports allowing temporary agriculture workers on H-2A visas to work in additional areas of agriculture and for a period longer than the 10-month limit with the potential for earning their green card.
- CA supports allowing flexibility in the H-2A program based on seasonal or year-round employer needs. CA will support legislation or policy changes that would increase the employer association's role in meeting the needs of American agriculture employers, similar to J-1 sponsors through the Exchange Visitors program.
- CA will take action to make certain policy makers understand the differences between the J-1 trainee and intern programs and other programs under the Exchange Visitor Program, including the Summer Work and Travel Program, and ensure that American agriculture is able to continue to benefit from CAEP and other J-1 trainee and intern programs.
- CA will sponsor language that strengthens the Agricultural "Aggie" Bond program with improvements that assist young farmers and ranchers including:
 - Increasing the loan limit on depreciable farm improvements to the current maximum real estate loan amount of \$477,000 and similarly indexed.
 - Change the definition of previously owned real estate from 30% of the "**median**" size farm in the county to 30% of the "**average**" size farm in the county. This would restore eligibility levels to the pre February 2009 levels.
- CA will support legislation at the state and federal level to initiate and fund Agricultural Apprenticeship Programs.

Small Business Policy

- CA will support plans that provide tax incentives to encourage job creation in under-served markets, both rural and urban.
- CA will support plans that reward risk and encourage innovation by increasing small business expensing limits, and expanding start-up loans and grants to micro businesses.
- CA will support closing business tax loopholes that do not encourage small business and self-employed job creation.
- CA supports equal tax treatment for all purchases of health insurance and wellness plans, whether made by an individual who is an employee, by a self-employed person, or by a small business on behalf of its employees.

CA will use the following strategies and methods to affect these legislative and goals and priorities:

- CA will develop a benefit tool for its members to analyze benefits and premiums of plans both inside and outside exchanges, and the advantages and disadvantages of essential health benefit plans that qualify for tax subsidy.
- CA will conduct issue-specific national surveys of its members and present results to Congress, regulatory issues, non-partisan interest groups and the media.
- CA will draft letters to members of Congress and state and federal regulatory agencies in support of its legislative priorities
- CA will participate in conferences, panels, symposiums to improve understanding of the issues and challenges faced by its members
- CA will continue to actively participate in coalitions including:
 - Coalition for Affordable Health Coverage www.cahc.net/
 - Family Business Estate Tax Coalition www.estatetaxrelief.org/
 - National Association of State Agriculture Finance Programs www.stateagfinance.org/
 - The Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange www.alliance-exchange.org/
- CA will provide written and oral testimony on the issues in which CA has expertise including health care, tax policy, agriculture, international exchange programs and rural issues.
- CA will advocate resolutions and policy priorities through meetings with lawmakers in D.C. and state legislatures.
- CA will convene district meetings with key congressional members and CA members/constituents when appropriate.
- CA will formulate and distribute press releases, articles, op-eds and white papers as needed.
- CA will communicate with members regarding these and other issues through newsletters, email blasts and action alerts.