



March 27, 2009

*VIA FACSIMILE & REGULAR MAIL*

The Honorable David A. Paterson  
Governor, State of New York  
State Capitol  
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

On behalf of our respective organizations, we are writing to oppose the more than \$500 million in new taxes on health insurance included in the 2009-10 state budget.

Health coverage in New York State is taxed at more than \$3 billion a year. For employers that provide coverage to employees, it has become the largest tax that these organizations pay. It is our collective belief that the proposed increase in health care taxes will have a significant negative impact on the constituents that each of our organizations represent. Businesses, employees, schools and all taxpayers will be hurt by this proposal.

While we respect the enormous fiscal challenge faced by the state in these difficult economic times, it is essential that health insurance remain as affordable as possible. Considering the \$348 million in new health care taxes already passed under the deficit reduction plan, the more than \$500 million in additional assessments proposed, and the annual increase in health care inflation costs that must also be factored in, health insurance premiums will increase sharply at a time when employers and employees can least afford it. Employers forced to drop health insurance plans due to these overwhelming costs will lead to more individuals joining government-funded programs, costing the state more in the long run.

At a time when New Yorkers are suffering under difficult economic conditions, we need to ensure that health care remain affordable. It is for this reason that we urge you to reconsider this proposal.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Sandra A. Parker in black ink.

Sandra A. Parker  
President & CEO  
Rochester Business Alliance

Handwritten signature of Jody Siegle in black ink.

Jody Siegle  
Executive Director  
Monroe County School Boards  
Association

Handwritten signature of James Bertolone in black ink.

James Bertolone  
President  
Rochester Labor Council, AFL-CIO

Cc:  
Laura Anglin, New York State Budget Director  
Dennis Whalen, New York State Director of State Operations