



Contact: Tracy Munford
(212) 614-5538 (office)
(646) 483-6804 (cell)

SIX MONTH ANNIVERSARY OF HEALTH REFORM LEGISLATION

CSS Statement by David R. Jones, Esq, President & CEO of Community Service Society

New York, NY, September 23, 2010 - Today marks the six month anniversary of President Obama's signing the landmark health reform legislation, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, into law. For decades, presidents both Democratic and Republican have sought to enact health care legislation that would cover almost all Americans. President Obama succeeded in doing so after just 14 months in office.

Although many features of the legislation will not go into effect until 2014, when more than 30 million uninsured Americans will be able to get affordable health coverage, we can see some benefits now. A Patient's Bill of Rights takes effect today, ending some of the worst abuses of insurance companies.

Insurers can no longer use pre-existing health conditions as a reason to deny coverage to children. Insurance companies cannot cap lifetime benefits, so that when previously healthy consumers suddenly need expensive care their coverage cannot be dropped. This will help prevent health care bankruptcies, which have

become so prevalent recently. There is now a ban on limiting choice of doctors and on restricting emergency room care. At a time when so many young people have been shut out of the labor market by the recession and a jobless recovery, the Act provides for coverage of children under age 26 on their parents' policies. In addition, the law includes new regulations that prevent unjustified rate hikes by insurance companies. Tax credits for small businesses that provide employer-sponsored coverage are also included in the law.

These are just a few changes that are taking affect now. We are already seeing a shift in the public support for the new law, which will continue as more people see the benefits that accrue over time. The law not only will make people's lives better; it will strengthen the nation since a healthier workforce will provide greater productivity as the nation responds to the demands of a global economy.

There is a great deal of discussion about partisan deadlock in Washington, and for good reasons. But this legislation is proof that government can respond to the needs of the people in beneficial and creative ways. The proponents of this law will be remembered for their foresight and courage in adopting this legislation.

For 160 years, the [Community Service Society of New York](#) has been the leading voice on behalf of low-income New Yorkers and continues to advocate for the economic security of the working poor in the nation's largest city.