



## **HEALTH CARE:** Keeping Americans Healthy and Productive; Unleashing Innovation

As leaders in the employer-sponsored health care system that provides quality benefits to approximately half the population, manufacturers go to great lengths to provide robust health insurance offerings to employees. Approximately 99% of NAM member companies offer health benefits to maintain a healthy workforce and attract and retain talent—and fundamentally because they believe it is the right thing to do for their employees. Yet, both large and small manufacturers continue to cite rising health care expenses as one of their top business concerns. Although manufacturers go to great lengths to provide competitive health insurance offerings to employees, manufacturers are united in the belief that efficiencies and improvements can be achieved.

Effective solutions will require reasonable, market-oriented approaches. The public and private sectors should work in collaboration to lower costs, address chronic conditions that pose serious public health risks and reduce ongoing access challenges for the uninsured. Drawing on the expertise of the private sector, the government should recognize that employers have an incentive and deep commitment to designing health care plans that improve outcomes while increasing the value and quality of the coverage provided.

Despite the many challenges and strains facing the health care system, we are a nation that prides itself on first-class, best-in-the-world medical care. Our institutions, public and private, continue to lead the world on patient care, lifesaving treatments and medical research. We must continue to uphold those successes while seeking to control or lower the cost of health care through reasonable market-oriented approaches. Employers are leading significant innovation in health care delivery, and those positive developments must be allowed to flourish.

The economies of scale that have come to define employer-sponsored coverage for approximately 159 million Americans create a vehicle to design benefits that are more flexible, innovative and efficient, but this only works if health care innovation is encouraged and not squelched by government interference. Manufacturers support policies that will promote innovation and value by encouraging reforms that are in step with the next generation of health care delivery.



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**Manufacturers across America are continually developing and implementing innovative health care benefits in order to deliver the highest quality care to our employees. Meanwhile, health care costs continue to climb, remaining a major headwind for manufacturers large and small. Policymakers need to remove barriers, such as onerous health care tax burdens, that decrease competitiveness and hinder manufacturers' ability to provide employees the best care possible."**

**—Chuck Wetherington, President, BTE Technologies, LLC**

### **A Health Care Agenda for the Future Must:**

- Seek efficiencies in the health care system. Fees, taxes, administrative paperwork, reporting requirements, benefit mandates and other policies stifle innovation and make providing health coverage to employees unnecessarily expensive for manufacturers.
- Encourage flexibility and embrace technology. Expanding coverage options, utilizing more telehealth and enabling innovative models of care are essential for manufacturers' efforts to maintain a healthy workforce and provide competitive benefits.
- Apply free enterprise principles to all aspects of health care policy reform. Such principles include, but are not limited to, protecting IP, encouraging transparency, opposing price control-oriented solutions and avoiding costly Medicare for All.
- Take on the challenge of reforming our medical liability system.

### **ACTIONS FOR LEADERS TO TAKE:**

- ✓ Protect employer-sponsored coverage by maintaining tax-exempt status of employee health benefits to avoid higher premiums for workers and families.
- ✓ Support reforms that move from a fee-for-service or volume-based system to a value-based system.
- ✓ Support policies that allow employers to increasingly use innovative approaches to providing coverage for their employees, such as wellness programs, association health plans and direct primary care.
- ✓ Reduce patient out-of-pocket costs by improving health savings accounts.