



**For Immediate Release**

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# News Release

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## Health Reform Needs Enforceable National Workforce Strategy *AAHC Urges Congress to Ensure Health Workforce Recommendations are Implemented*

WASHINGTON, December 14 – Congressional leaders must ensure that health reform includes a health workforce planning body with sufficient authority to ensure implementation of an integrated, coordinated national health workforce policy, according to Dr. Steven A. Wartman, president and CEO of the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC). “With each step in the legislative process, the Congress has progressed toward a more effective health workforce planning process,” Wartman said. “Still missing from both House and Senate bills is a mechanism -- such as national health workforce commission recommendations that automatically go into effect unless overridden by Congress -- to ensure timely implementation of the recommendations,” added Wartman, urging Congress to address this concern before finalizing the legislation.

An updated analysis of the current House and Senate bills released today by the AAHC identifies additional strengths and weaknesses in the bills when measured against the AAHC’s own health workforce recommendations:

- *The AAHC recommends that development and implementation of an integrated, coordinated, strategic national health workforce policy be the primary objective of any advisory committee or national commission.* The House bill contains a clear statement that the purpose of its advisory committee is “to develop and implement an integrated, coordinated, and strategic national health workforce policy reflective of current and evolving health workforce needs,” while the Senate bill only lists national health workforce policy as one of several priorities.
- *The AAHC recommends the list of enumerated issues to be addressed by the advisory committee or national commission include the harmonization of conflicting national and state-based regulatory and private self-regulatory standards (e.g., licensure, scope of practice, accreditation).* The Senate bill expressly directs its national commission to “identify barriers to improved coordination at the Federal, State, and local levels,” but the House bill does not expressly address the need for harmonization.
- *The AAHC recommends the creation of a permanent, independent advisory committee or national commission that serves as a continuously available policy research and consultative resource.* The Senate bill creates an independent national commission composed of members appointed by the Comptroller General, while the House bill only creates an advisory committee appointed by and reporting through the Secretary.

The legislative analysis can be downloaded from the AAHC website at:

[http://www.aahcdc.org/policy/AAHC\\_Health\\_Workforce\\_Bill\\_Analysis\\_12112009.pdf](http://www.aahcdc.org/policy/AAHC_Health_Workforce_Bill_Analysis_12112009.pdf).

The AAHC ([www.aahcdc.org](http://www.aahcdc.org)) is a national non-profit association dedicated to advancing the nation’s health and well-being through leadership in health professions education, patient care, and research. For topical discussion of health-related news, see the AAHC blog, [www.HealthPROSe.org](http://www.HealthPROSe.org).

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