

FAMILIES FOR BETTER CARE

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May 17, 2011

Mark Parkinson, President
American Health Care Association
1201 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Parkinson,

I am writing you in regards to your comments in this week's *New York Times*. In the article you defend your organization's attempt to have nursing homes exempt from the new federal health care law requiring basic health care coverage for employees.

You essentially claimed that the primary reason for this request was due to the lack of profitability of the nursing home industry and you blamed, ironically, the federal government's reimbursements as a de facto cause of your industry's impoverished status.

I respectfully request that you reconsider this outrageous and deceitful position.

As I am sure you are aware and will agree, the basic health of frontline caregivers is an essential element in the service and custodial care of residents. Having workers calling in sick too often (because they were unable to avail themselves of preventative care) or – even worse – showing up and working while sick will severely jeopardize the safety and well-being of residents.

I am also sure you are aware that independent observers, like such publications as *Senior Care Investor* aren't buying your cries of poverty.

In fact, a recent issue (March, 2011) cited record-setting purchase prices for SNF beds! Further, the periodical, which many consider a leading investment guide for your sector, has been a steady siren of profitability for senior housing, skilled nursing facilities and nursing homes of all varieties. To illustrate, here are just a few recent headlines:

- *Senior Housing Performance; Profits Are Up (April, 2011)*
- *Health Care REIT Dominates (March, 2011)*
- *SNF Bed Prices Hit Record (March, 2011)*

Of course, *Senior Care Investor*, is not alone in crowing about the current profitability of the nursing home industry, a recent story (February 25, 2011) from the *Washington Business Journal* recently exclaimed, "Sunrise Senior Living Profits Surge Five-Fold" and in fact, most recent quarterly and annual reports easily retrieved off business wires show a steady stream of accolades citing things like; "positive trends," "enhanced profit contribution," "positive revenue trends" and "improving margins."

While I am certain that you, or anyone in your shop could find a few exceptions, the fact remains that the nursing home industry is, by and large, enjoying some very rich times.

In light of the healthy profits your industry is enjoying, I ask that you – as a representative of those receiving billions of federal health care dollars – reverse your position and provide the minimum health insurance for your employees as required in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Sincerely,



Brian Lee, *Executive Director*
Families for Better Care, Inc.