

**COALITION**  
FOR HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH

December 14, 2009

The Honorable David Obey  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services,  
Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services,  
Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services,  
Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services,  
Education  
and Related Agencies  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Dear Chairman Obey, Chairman Harkin, Representative Tiahrt and Senator Cochran:

On behalf of the Coalition for Health Services Research, please accept our thanks for the Subcommittee's support of health services research and health data in Consolidated Appropriations Act of FY2010. The Coalition is the advocacy arm of AcademyHealth—the professional society for health services research and health policy representing 3,800 individual members and 160 organizational affiliates.

The Coalition, as the leader of the Friends of AHRQ, is very pleased that within the \$397 million provided to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), you give AHRQ clear direction to invest funding in ways that will maximize the capacity for more and better research needed to improve health and health care. Specifically, we are grateful you have provided AHRQ nearly \$24 million for investigator initiated research grants that will yield important contributions to health care reform. We also strongly support your guidance that AHRQ balance its research portfolio by supporting all aspects of health services research—health care cost, quality, and access—outlined in its statutory mission.

The Coalition, as the leader of the Friends of NCHS, also commends you for the serious and sustained investment you have made in the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). With the nearly \$139 million you have provided NCHS in FY 2010, as well as clear direction to NCHS to protect seminal surveys and preserve vital statistics collection, NCHS will continue to rebuild and evolve into a 21<sup>st</sup> Century statistical agency capable of evaluating the impact of health reform.

Once again, we thank you for your continued efforts to bolster health services research and health data. The accomplishments of our field would not be possible without your leadership and support. If you have questions, please contact our Washington representative, Emily Holubowich, at 202.484.1100 or [eholubowich@dc-crd.com](mailto:eholubowich@dc-crd.com).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. David Helms", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

W. David Helms  
President & CEO