

July 3, 2012

Contact: Liz Jennings

For Immediate Release

703-600-2063

RILA Urges President Obama to Release Long-Overdue Employer Healthcare Regulations

Arlington, VA – In a letter sent to the White House Monday, [Retail Industry Leaders Association \(RILA\)](#) President Sandy Kennedy urged President Obama to direct his administration to release long-overdue proposed health care regulations that will affect nearly 170 million Americans currently receiving employer-sponsored health coverage.

The crown-jewel of America's healthcare system, employer-sponsored coverage, has been in existence since World War II. Now however, the complexity of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), poor timing and the lack of implementation guidelines threaten this voluntary system.

"President Obama repeatedly assured Americans that if they liked their health insurance, they could keep it. However, today, with less than a year and a half until the law takes effect, and no meaningful implementation guidelines available for employers, those assurances are in doubt," said RILA President Sandy Kennedy.

The letter noted that since the enactment of the ACA, RILA and its member companies have had numerous constructive conversations with, and provided policy recommendations to regulators. Employers have been deprived of regulations necessary to comply with the law's numerous requirements. Retailers are seriously concerned about burdensome, inflexible regulations that provide no time for implementation and could prevent employers from continuing to offer quality, affordable healthcare.

"While retailers are committed to continuing to provide health coverage to their employees, overregulation jeopardizes their ability to do so," said Kennedy.

RILA continues to urge the Administration to recognize the unique challenges facing retailers, and not issue regulations that hinder retailers' ability to maintain flexible work options and affordable health coverage for their employees.

"RILA looks forward to discussing these concerns with the Administration and ensuring that retailers' can continue to offer quality, affordable coverage that fits the unique needs of their workforce and provides coverage to millions of employees and their families," Kennedy concluded.

[\[Share on Facebook\]](#)[\[Share on LinkedIn\]](#)[\[Shared on Twitter\]](#)[\[Share with AddThis\]](#)

RILA is the trade association of the world's largest and most innovative retail companies. RILA members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which

together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs and more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad. RILA members offer quality and affordable healthcare to employees and their families and are leaders in benefits design by customizing plans to meet their workforces' specific needs.

###

A copy of the letter is available [here](#) and pasted below

July 2, 2012

President Barack Obama

The White House

Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

You have repeatedly assured Americans that if they like their health insurance, they could keep it. However, given the remarkable complexity of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the rapidly approaching 2014 effective date and the complete absence of implementation guidelines available for employers, those assurances are in serious doubt.

On behalf of the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA), our members and the millions of retail workers who receive healthcare from their employer, I write to ask that your administration release long-overdue proposed regulations and urge that they contain the flexibility necessary to allow retailers to develop benefits that are affordable and suited to the unique needs of their workforce.

Retailers are committed to continuing to offer quality, affordable coverage to their employees and families. RILA members, who include the world's largest and most innovative retail companies, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, are leaders in benefits design by customizing plans to meet their workforces' specific needs. RILA promotes consumer choice and economic freedom through public policy and industry operational excellence. Our members provide millions of jobs and operate more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad.

With nearly 170 million Americans covered today through their employer, there is no question that employer-sponsored health insurance is the crown-jewel of America's healthcare system. However, with less than a year and a half until the ACA is set to take effect, your administration has provided employers with no guidance on how they will be expected to comply with the many new requirements contained within the law.

Since the enactment of ACA, RILA and its member companies have had numerous constructive conversations with, and provided policy recommendations to, officials at the Departments of the Treasury, Labor, and Health and Human Services, the Internal Revenue Service, and within the White House, about the importance of developing regulations that provide employers with

the flexibility needed to continue offering quality, affordable health coverage to hardworking Americans and their families.

RILA is gravely concerned that overly burdensome, inflexible regulations will cause millions of Americans to churn in and out of the employer-sponsored system. Employers of variable workforces face unique challenges. RILA strongly urges that regulations recognize these unique challenges by including flexible approaches that can avoid the revolving door, or churn, effect of employees bouncing between employer-sponsored plans, Exchange coverage, or federal health programs. American families need consistent and predictable coverage, and employers need to avoid the burdensome administration costs associated with a frequently changing employment status.

Sincerely,

Sandra L. Kennedy
President

