American Benefits Council
NEWS RELEASE

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With constitutional challenge resolved, employers set sights on 2014 obligations

Congress and the Obama Administration need to be practical, not political

WASHINGTON, DC — "For the nation's major employers, who provide health coverage for tens of millions of Americans, today's decision by the Supreme Court means that their sights are set on the challenges that lie ahead, especially as they prepare to meet the law's core provisions that become effective in 2014," American Benefits Council President James A. Klein said today.

"Throughout the legal challenges to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), the vast majority of employers remained focused on meeting their obligations under the law. Whatever steps Congress and the Administration take from today forward must clarify – not complicate – employer responsibilities. If both branches of government focus on scoring political points, rather than helping employers and health insurers meet their obligations, then the majority of Americans who rely on employer-sponsored coverage will suffer," said Klein.

"Employers have had two straightforward goals for health care reform over the past two years since the law was enacted," Klein said. "First and foremost, employers want reforms to lead to lower costs and higher health care quality. We must not let up for a moment on the urgency of pursuing the valuable provisions of the law that aim to reduce unnecessary errors in our health care system, reward proven performance and make health care information more transparent for both

consumers and purchasers. And second, employers need timely, practical and flexible guidance interpreting the law so they can continue to meet their compliance obligations."

"Employers need answers quickly to a number of pressing issues," Klein said "especially those related to the 2014 'shared employer responsibility' provisions, how federal regulators will interpret the increased incentives for employer wellness programs, and whether the health insurance exchanges will operate as intended and be prepared to administer the new and complex premium subsidy program."

"The next 18 months between now and January 2014 are certain to be challenging as implementation of PPACA moves forward," Klein said. "We are confident employers will continue to take seriously their obligations and we will continue to work with Congress, the President and all stakeholders to identify workable solutions to our nation's health care challenges."

For more information, or to arrange an interview with Council staff, please contact Jason Hammersla, Council director, communications, at 202-289-6700.

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The American Benefits Council is the national trade association for companies concerned about federal legislation and regulations affecting all aspects of the employee benefits system. The Council's members represent the entire spectrum of the private employee benefits community and either sponsor directly or administer retirement and health plans covering more than 100 million Americans.

http://www.americanbenefitscouncil.org/issues/health/reform.cfm#rpr