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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 28, 2010

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HR Policy Association Requests Guidance from the Administration on Provisions of New Health Care Reform Regulations

Washington, DC—HR Policy Association President and CEO Jeffrey C. McGuinness sent a letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and Labor Secretary Hilda Solis requesting that they direct their agencies to issue regulations and guidance on critical provisions under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) as soon as possible in order for companies to have adequate time to prepare, make changes to their health benefit plans and communicate those changes to their employees.

HR Policy Association represents the chief human resource officers of more than 300 large employers doing business in the United States and globally. The Association's member companies employ more than ten million Americans, nearly nine percent of the private sector workforce in the United States. As such, the Association's member companies sponsor health benefit plans providing health care coverage to millions of Americans.

Employers who sponsor health care plans, particularly large employers, need regulatory guidance on certain issues arising under the new health care law in order to comply with the significant changes required under this wide-ranging legislation.

The letter states, "As you know, PPACA imposes requirements on employers that will significantly impact their health benefits plans. Major elements of the law took effect upon enactment, and others have an effective date for plan years beginning within six months of enactment. Employers need a reasonable period of time prior to open enrollment periods in order to consider the implications of policy changes, implement required changes, and effectively communicate those changes to employees. Delays resulting from a lack of clarity in the new law or regulations will hinder employers' ability to plan for the short and long-term strategy for their health benefit plans.

"Specifically, employers need guidance relating to grandfathered plan status and associated rules, the application of certain requirements of the new health care law to retiree-only plans, and determining what annual limits plans may set on health care benefits until 2014. In addition, we urge you to draft regulations in a manner that will not adversely impact the health benefits provided by large employers to millions of employees, retirees, and their families.

"We stand ready to work with your agencies to ensure a smooth implementation of PPACA."

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To view the letter visit:

<http://www.hrpolicy.org/downloads/2010/10-67%20HHS-DOL%20Grandfathering%20regs%20letter.pdf>

HR Policy Association is the lead organization representing chief human resource officers of major employers. The Association consists of more than 300 of the largest corporations doing business in the United States and globally, and these employers are represented in the organization by their most senior human resource executive. Collectively, their companies employ more than 18 million employees worldwide and have a combined market capitalization of more than \$7.5 trillion. These senior corporate officers participate in the Association because of their passionate interest in the direction of human resource policy. Their objective is to use the combined power of the membership to act as a positive influence to improve public policy, the HR marketplace, and the human resource profession. For more information visit www.hrpolicy.org