



National Committee to Preserve
Social Security and Medicare

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March 4, 2008

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

On behalf of the millions of members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, I am writing to endorse your legislation, the *Caring for an Aging America Act of 2008*. We applaud you for your efforts to attract and retain health care professionals and direct care workers to serve our growing population of older Americans.

As our aging population is expected to double over the next twenty five years, our country could experience severe shortages in the number of practitioners trained in the fields of geriatric care and gerontology. And unfortunately, few financial or other incentives exist for physicians, nurses, social workers, psychologists, and other health care professionals to encourage training or the pursuit of careers caring for America's seniors.

We understand that your legislation would increase the number of individuals trained in caring for the aging population through a loan forgiveness program for certain health professionals who complete specialty training in geriatrics or gerontology and who commit to provide clinical services to older adults for a minimum of two years. Your legislation would also expand career advancement opportunities for direct care workers who provide services in home and community-based or facility-based long-term care settings. Furthermore, your legislation would establish a Health and Long-Term Care Workforce Advisory Panel to examine and advise each Secretary of Health and Human Services and each Congress on workforce issues related to health and long-term care for the aging population.

We strongly support your effort to ensure that our health care workforce will be prepared to meet the specialized needs of older adults. Thank you for introducing this legislation and for your leadership on behalf of America's seniors.

Cordially,

Barbara B. Kennelly
President and CEO