

**NAIC President Roger Sevigny's Introductory Remarks for Vice President Joe Biden:**

We are honored today, Mr. Vice President, to welcome you to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners — and to introduce you to the nation's insurance regulators. NAIC members have a front row seat here today — but we also **have** a front row seat **every day** in the arena of our nation's health care system. We are all too familiar with the current system's challenges and shortcomings — especially in areas pertaining to health insurance.

As front-line consumer representatives, our state insurance departments handle millions of insurance-related calls and complaints every year. In many departments, we know that at least **half** the complaints we receive deal with health plans and health insurance.

With landmark health legislation on Capitol Hill moving to a most critical stage, your visit here today is timely — and we thank you for arranging to meet with us during this historic time.

We share the Administration's goal to extend coverage to the millions of Americans **not** covered by a health plan — and to make health insurance affordable for all. We pledge to work with the Administration and Members of Congress to find the best possible solutions.

Distinguished NAIC colleagues and guests, please join me in welcoming the Vice President of the United States of America — The Honorable Joe Biden.

**Excerpts Of Vice President Biden's Prepared Remarks To The National Association Of Insurance Commissioners**

**September 22, 2009**

“A report released by the White House today finds that health insurance premiums in states have gone up between 90-150% over the last decade – far faster than wages and inflation.

This new state by state data is astounding and makes the case for nationwide reform. From Alaska—where premiums increased 145% while wages grew just 35%—to Florida, where premiums increased 121% while wages increased 43%—even, to Michigan, where the 37% gap between premiums and wages is actually the smallest—all around the country, we see these gaps widening.

To state the obvious: this is simply unsustainable. For families, for businesses, for state budgets, and for our national economy.”

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“As the White House report released today states, we need good ground rules for all insurance companies to abide by to restore stability and security to our health care system.

These are the basic ground rules we need:

- No Discrimination for Pre-Existing Conditions;
- No Exorbitant Out-of-Pocket Expenses, Deductibles or Co-Pays;
- No Cost-Sharing for Preventive Care;
- No Dropping of Coverage for Seriously Ill;
- No Gender Discrimination;
- No Annual or Lifetime Caps on Coverage;
- Extended Coverage for Young Adults;
- Guaranteed Insurance Renewal.

These ground rules don't pick and choose which companies they apply to---they apply to everyone. The playing field is level. Every insurance company doing business in this country will have to play by these basic rules, and competition will remain healthy.”

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“The status quo is unsustainable. States have always been at the forefront of reform, and we can learn a lot from your experiences. But we know that a nationwide reform plan is the best way to create the most efficient, most secure, fairest health care system for the American people.”

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“We have never been this close to real health insurance reform. I mean that. I have never seen such broad agreement on so much of a major reform plan in my decades of public service.”

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“The health care system is broken, the need for reform is acute. The time is now to get this done—and get it done right.”