

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Divided We Fail Applauds Sen. Baucus for Kicking Off the Post-Election Health Care Debate**

WASHINGTON – Members of Divided We Fail today released the following statement following Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus' release of his blueprint addressing our nation's health care crisis.

AARP Executive Vice President Nancy LeMond:

“We applaud Chairman Baucus today for beginning the difficult discussion of health care reform by releasing today's blueprint. Solving this complicated problem will not be easy, but it required leadership to take the first step toward a solution. We hope others will follow with their ideas for health reform so we can have the great debate everyone is so hopeful for. Divided We Fail will do our part, too. In addition to speaking with the more than 50 million people we represent about the importance of this issue and the tradeoffs that may be necessary, the groups that make up Divided We Fail have pledged to work together, despite our differences, to help Congress and the President craft a solution.

“The mission to fix our nation's health care crisis is just beginning. Today's release is an important start. Divided We Fail will be there throughout this campaign to help get this done; we are hopeful that other elected leaders will follow Senator Baucus' lead and put their ideas on the table in short order.”

Business Roundtable President John Castellani:

“Continued rising health care costs are burdening employers, employees and the government while sapping our nation's competitive strength. With Americans facing loss of jobs, reduced savings and tight budgets, we are pleased that Chairman Baucus is moving quickly and is focused on helping those in need gain access to affordable and quality health care. As a nation, we cannot simply maintain the status quo when it comes to health care.”

National Federation of Independent Business Executive Vice President Dan Danner:

“Reforming our nation's healthcare system is no small task, it requires strong leadership and will require difficult decisions. We commend Chairman Baucus for his diligent efforts to begin a detailed discussion about this issue and applaud him for initiating first steps toward meaningful healthcare reform.

“It is important to remember in these tough economic times, healthcare is an issue that directly impacts the pocketbooks of all Americans, some of the most vulnerable are those who own and work for small businesses. That is why it is so important that we work

together to urgently address this issue. NFIB is committed to working with our partners in Divided We Fail to continue to offer constructive and valuable contributions to this debate.”

Andy Stern, SEIU International President:

“Senator Baucus’s blueprint underlines what working families, businesses and industry leaders all agree: when it come to health care in America the status quo is just unacceptable. Today, Senator Baucus has proven yet again why he is known as a champion for health care reform—and for the people of Montana. SEIU’s 2 million members look forward to standing with Senator Baucus as he works with President-elect Obama and other Members of Congress to fix the country’s ailing health care system.”

For copies of Divided We Fail’s health care agenda, contact AARP Media Relations.

**Divided We Fail**

*It's time we ensure health and long-term financial security for all. That's why AARP, Business Roundtable, the Service Employees International Union and the National Federation of Independent Business, are leading Divided We Fail, an initiative to give voice to millions of Americans who are tired of letting Washington gridlock stand in the way of affordable, quality health care and long-term financial security – the most pressing domestic issues facing our nation. Common sense solutions are needed, and everyone – individuals, businesses and government – has a role and a responsibility in ensuring health and financial security for all. Go to [www.dividedwefail.org](http://www.dividedwefail.org) to learn more.*