



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 12/19/08

Contact: Loren Riegelhaupt, 917-921-1850

Statement in support of the primary care reform and investment in the New York State Executive Budget

While Governor Paterson's Executive Budget makes many difficult and painful choices, he is right to continue his commitment to reforming our healthcare system in this time of crisis. The health care delivery system in New York suffers from severe and historic underinvestment in primary care that has led to poorer health and higher costs for all New Yorkers. With the downturn in the economy our already fragile primary care infrastructure will disintegrate further, leaving families without care and driving up Medicaid costs. From expanding health coverage, to increasing primary care payments, to incentivizing patient-centered care and investing in health care for uninsured patients, Governor Paterson has chosen to continue crucial reforms that are in the interest of patients and will go a long way toward helping New York reign in health care costs.

This Budget is not perfect and we look forward to working with the legislature and the Governor to ensure that the tough decisions ahead do not disproportionately fall on the shoulders of other patients who are most in need. Yet, we commend the Governor for recognizing that in this painful economic climate, we need effective primary care that can keep individuals, families, and communities healthy; eliminate health disparities between racial, ethnic, and economic groups; and reduce health care costs associated with avoidable emergency room visits and hospital stays.

The Primary Care Coalition supports primary care initiatives that improve care and outcomes for all New Yorkers through sufficient payments to providers; investment in infrastructure, technology, and workforce; and encouraging the delivery of high quality, patient-centered care. We look forward to working with the Governor and Legislature to enact these and other critical health care reforms.

About the Primary Care Coalition

The Primary Care Coalition is comprised of five leading statewide primary care organizations all of which recognize the importance of putting primary care on top of the State's health care agenda.