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April 18, 2008

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Outreach Program Achieves Significant Movement of Uninsured to Private and Public Health Coverage

Capitol Hill Briefed On Ten-City Experiment That Shows Importance of Information, Education in Addressing Uninsured Challenge

WASHINGTON – Results from a new health coverage outreach program demonstrate that the nation’s uninsured rolls can be reduced through programs that link uninsured Americans with information on existing public resources and affordable private health plans.

The Healthcare Leadership Council, a coalition of the nation’s leading health care companies and organizations, briefing congressional offices today on the results of its *Health Access America* campaign. In several cities over the past 18 months, *Health Access America* built coalitions of community organizations and hosted over 1,000 events that provided information on health coverage resources and provided individual counseling and assistance for those interested in enrolling in public health coverage programs or purchasing a private health insurance policy.

The results have been noteworthy. Over 33,000 people attended *Health Access America* events, and these activities have resulted in 16,405 individuals moving from the ranks of the uninsured to some form of private or public health coverage. Events took place in Cleveland, OH; Las Vegas, NV; Memphis, TN; Nashville, TN; Baton Rouge, LA; Columbia, SC; Corpus Christi, TX; Lansing, MI; Las Cruces, NM; and Raleigh, NC.

The outreach programs were guided by HLC-commissioned research, conducted by The Schapiro Group of Atlanta, that showed 54 percent of uninsured Americans do not know where to turn for reliable information on health coverage.

“While we need public policy reforms to make health coverage more accessible, there is much that can be done right now to link uninsured Americans with the plans and programs that are already out there,” said HLC president Mary R. Grealy. “The results of *Health Access America* underscore the importance of outreach and education. There are a lot of people who don’t know they are eligible for public programs. And busy small business people and working families don’t always have the time to do comparison shopping for affordable health insurance.”

She added, “We can make meaningful gains by providing people with the information they need to make sound decisions for their and their families’ health and well-being.”
