

Good afternoon – my name is Dr. Valerie Arkoosh – I am a physician in Philadelphia and president-elect of the National Physicians Alliance. The National Physicians Alliance represents over 20,000 doctors from all specialties across the United States and we are 100% committed to fighting for guaranteed, high quality affordable health care for all.

Let me start by thanking Congresswoman Schwartz for her personal leadership in this fight – the Congresswoman has been fighting for high quality, affordable health care for her constituents throughout her entire career and we are lucky to have such outstanding representation in the United States Congress.

Last week, The House of Representatives introduced the America’s Affordable Health Choices Act (HR 3200) – this landmark legislation will make high quality, affordable health care available to all Americans and give our patients the peace of mind that their coverage will be there when they need it. It will also create a new public health insurance option that will make private health insurance companies compete on what matters most – patient satisfaction and quality.

We are in a unique moment in our nation’s history. For too long doctors have been divided on how to fix our ailing health care system – that division has stopped progress too many times. But something is different in 2009 – doctors are united in our support for health care reform. The National Physicians Alliance and other organizations representing over 250,000 doctors have been fighting hard for exactly the kind of reform that is in HR 3200 – robust support for preventive and primary care, an emphasis on paying for high quality health care, rather than high quantity care, and the inclusion of a public health insurance option to create meaningful choice for our patients. And just last week, the American Medical Association and the American College of Physicians joined that fight and endorsed this landmark legislation.

Our patients can’t wait another day for health care reform. Too many patients are losing their employer sponsored coverage or are having their care delayed or denied by their health insurance company. Too many doctors are spending more time on the phone with insurance companies than in the exam room with our patients. Doctors are united in our support for health care reform. The urgency

has never been greater. The National Physicians Alliance is proud to support HR 3200. On this day when we celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of putting Americans on the moon, let us pledge that 40 years from now we will look back to this year as the one in which our nation made another audacious achievement – guaranteed, high quality, health care for all.