



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ *Driving business success*

March 21, 2017

Congressman Sam Johnson  
U.S. House of Representative  
2304 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington D.C. 20515

Re: Association Health Plans

Dear Chairman Johnson;

On behalf of the Richardson Chamber of Commerce, a 5-star chamber, I write in strong support of the *Small Business Health Fairness Act*. This legislation will increase small businesses' bargaining power with health insurance providers and ensure a level playing field for smaller entities that want to help their workers and families with health care costs. The Richardson Chamber of Commerce commends you for your longstanding leadership on this important issue to the small business community. With more than 650 member organizations, the Richardson Chamber of Commerce continues the goal of its founding fathers to serve as the cornerstone of economic and community development for the city of Richardson. In order to continue that growth, our small businesses must be allowed to offer affordable healthcare to their employees.

While the small business community's economic output is great, its negotiating power in the health care market is at a competitive disadvantage. The federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act, which currently permits large corporations and labor organizations to "self-insure" and offer insurance with certain exemptions from state law, does not provide small business with the same advantage. The law must be reformed to empower small employers with the ability to obtain and offer competitively priced health insurance.

For these reasons, the Richardson Chamber of Commerce and our member companies, strongly support the *Small Business Health Fairness Act*, which will allow small businesses the opportunity to band together to provide their employees with better, more affordable health insurance coverage. With rising medical costs being a top concern of both individuals and employers, the impact of this increased availability of affordable insurance would be significant.

The Richardson Chamber commends your efforts to provide small businesses with health care options in a thoughtful and constructive manner. We look forward to working with you on this key legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Sproull". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William C. Sproull  
President and CEO