

June 21, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
2468 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2049 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Katherine Clark
Democratic Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
2368 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker McCarthy, Majority Leader Scalise, Democratic Leader Jeffries, and Democratic Whip Clark:

On behalf of the more than 1.5 million members, the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) urges passage of H.R. 3799, the *CHOICE Arrangement Act*. The bill includes the NAR-supported *Association Health Plans Act*, which would expand access to association health plans (AHPs) to more Americans, including the hard-working self-employed workers of the real estate industry. As health care costs continue to rise year after year, it is important there remains a broad availability of options for quality, comprehensive health insurance for all. We urge you to support this bill so that AHPs are available as an affordable option for individuals and small business owners across the country.

NAR is America's largest trade association, with a member base composed of residential and commercial brokers, salespeople, property managers, appraisers, counselors, and others engaged in the real estate industry. Eighty-seven percent of NAR's members are independent contractors, and many are small business owners. Self-employed workers and small entrepreneurs often have limited insurance options in the individual or small group markets, where affordability remains a top priority alongside access to preferred doctors. Last year, approximately 11 percent of members reported not having any health insurance, citing costs as the primary barrier. This legislation would support cost-effective and quality insurance coverage for more Americans, including self-employed real estate professionals seeking and needing critical health care services.

The AHP Act provisions expand the definition of employer and employee to include self-employed individuals, including real estate professionals. The bill also clarifies that AHPs must include critical *Affordable Care Act* protections, charge an actuarially fair premium, and prohibit discrimination based on health status or pre-existing conditions. According to the Congressional Budget Office, upon implementation, these provisions could increase the number of people with health insurance purchased through association plans by an average of 200,000 per year. After the Department of Labor promulgated regulations that allowed AHPs to enroll self-employed individuals, many REALTOR® associations and members around the country found that very similar plans could produce an average savings between 5 percent and 50 percent for real estate professionals. These plans also included the same consumer protections as this legislation and offered broader provider networks compared to individual and small group market plans for their participants, which significantly increased access to care for many who could not obtain an affordable plan in the individual market. Unfortunately,

litigation and subsequent Department of Labor action ended these attractive plans, which is why we are supportive of Congressional action to revive these beneficial insurance solutions.

We urge you to pass this legislation including the AHP Act to expand quality and cost effective insurance to more individuals and families. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me, or Christie DeSanctis, Director of Business, Insurance, and Federal Financing Policy, at 202-383-1102 or CDeSanctis@NAR.REALTOR.

Sincerely,



Kenny Parcell
2023 President, National Association of REALTORS®