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### **CA PRESIDENT APPLAUDS PRESIDENT BUSH FOR INCLUDING FUNDING FOR STATE HIGH-RISK HEALTH INSURANCE POOLS**

FERGUS FALLS, Minn. – “On behalf of the more than 200,000 Americans who now receive health insurance from state high-risk health insurance pools and the many others who could take advantage of these pools, I want to applaud President Bush for including federal funding in his fiscal year 2009 budget for the Department of Health and Human Services,” said Wayne Nelson, president of Communicating for America (CA). “We met with HHS officials to encourage this funding and we are pleased with the result.”

The president’s budget proposes \$75 million in grants in both FY 2009 and FY 2010 to help states offer health insurance options to hard-to-insure populations as authorized by the State High-Risk Pool Extension Act of 2006.

Nelson said this act authorized \$75 million per year for high-risk pools through 2010 but did not automatically appropriate funds each fiscal year. Through CA’s efforts – and the efforts of supporting organizations – the Omnibus Bill passed by the Congress and signed into law for FY 2008 included \$49 million for high-risk pools.

“We will work hard to see that the Congress appropriates the money for fiscal years 2009 and 2010 that is included in the president’s budget and is authorized by law,” Nelson emphasized. “We believe high-risk pools serve a vital role in helping those who otherwise would be uninsured, while stabilizing the cost of health insurance in the individual market. This funding helps meet these goals.”

“CA has actively supported high risk pools since the creation of the Minnesota pool by the state legislature in 1976,” said Nelson. “Since that time, 32 other states have joined Minnesota in creating high-risk pools that now offer health insurance to Americans who otherwise might not be able to obtain coverage.”

Communicating for America is a 37-year-old, national nonprofit organization headquartered in Fergus Falls, Minn., which represents small business and agriculture members throughout the United States. For more information on CA, visit the Web site at [www.cabenefits.org](http://www.cabenefits.org).

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