



April 2, 2010

Federal Legislative Update

Health Reform

On Tuesday, President Obama signed into law the “reconciliation” bill (HR 4872), which modifies *The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* (Public Law 111-148) already [signed into law](#) by President Obama last week. The reconciliation bill includes such provisions as Medicaid payment reform, and its signature into law this week serves as the final legislative step in passing comprehensive health reform for children and pediatricians.

The implementation of many of the law’s provisions will take place piece by piece, with some child health components of the law taking effect immediately and others over the next several years. Provisions to take effect in 2010 include dependent coverage for young people up to age 26 for all individual and group policies, as well as the elimination of pre-existing condition exclusions for children.

Health Reform Resources from the Department of Federal Affairs:

Visit FederalAdvocacy.aap.org (AAP Member Center login required) for resources on health reform and other federal legislative issues, such as:

- a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document that explains what some of the child health provisions in the new laws will mean for children and pediatricians;
- an [implementation timeline](#) developed by the Kaiser Family Foundation that details when provisions of the health reform law will be implemented over the next several years;
- fact sheets developed by the White House on what health reform means for [children](#) and [families](#);
- press statements issued by the AAP following key legislative steps in the health reform debate;
- opinion pieces on health reform recently published by AAP members and leadership; and
- copies of all weekly federal legislative updates, dating back to the spring of 2009.

AAP Urges FDA Committee to Ban Menthol Cigarettes

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) Tobacco Products Scientific Advisory Committee (TPSAC) met for the first time this week, March 30-31, 2010. The meeting focused primarily on the issue of menthol cigarettes, which were exempted from the ban on flavored cigarettes in *The Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act*. TPSAC has until March 23, 2011 to produce a report to the FDA summarizing the available science on menthol in cigarettes and providing recommendations to the FDA on menthol regulation.

The AAP offered comments to the committee, urging the FDA to ban menthol-flavored tobacco products because of their impact on youth. Susanne Tanski, MD, FAAP, a principal investigator with AAP's Julius B. Richmond Center of Excellence, delivered comments for the Academy.

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