



July 2, 2010

Federal Legislative Update

In this update:

- U.S. Supreme Court Overturns Chicago Gun Ban
- Dr. Palfrey Testifies Before Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform
- HHS Launches New Consumer-Friendly Website on Health Reform

US Supreme Court Overturns Chicago Gun Ban

On Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Chicago's ban on private ownership of handguns, saying the Second Amendment applies to states and municipalities as well as the federal government.

In a 5-4 ruling the Supreme Court extended its landmark 2008 *Heller vs. United States* ruling—that individual Americans have a constitutional right to own guns—to all cities and states for the first time. Some 90 million Americans own an estimated 200 million guns.

Almost nine children die every day by gunfire—one every two hours and 45 minutes. Annually, that number is almost 3,200. The Academy is very disappointed with the ruling, which will undermine efforts to protect children and adolescents from preventable injuries and death.

The Academy joined the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine in releasing the following press release on the issue: <http://www.aap.org/advocacy/washing/AAPSAHMStatementFinal.pdf>.

The Academy has also posted updated resources, including talking points and educational guides, for AAP members on the Member Center: <http://www.aap.org/moc/docs/firearms.cfm>. (Log-in required).

Dr. Palfrey Testifies Before Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform

On Wednesday, AAP President Dr. Judith Palfrey testified before the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. She urged the Commission to maintain funding for critical public health programs for children and adolescents, and emphasized the economic value of early investment in the next generation.

Following unsuccessful attempts by Congress to create a "debt commission", President Barack Obama created the bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform in February 2010. The Commission is charged with identifying policies to improve the fiscal situation in the medium term and to achieve fiscal sustainability over the long run. The Commission will make recommendations at the end of 2010 on ways to balance the budget, excluding interest payments on the debt, by 2015.

In her testimony, Dr. Palfrey urged the Commission to abide by a 'Do No Harm' pledge when it comes to our Nation's children. The testimony emphasized that strong financial investments in early childhood

education, children's health care, and prevention programs made today will pay extraordinary dividends in years to come, and sustained investments over time - uninterrupted - will regularly compound the benefits of earlier investments and reduce overall health care costs.

Dr. Palfrey's complete testimony can be found here:

<http://www.aap.org/advocacy/washing/DeficitCommissionPalfreytestimony63010.pdf>.

HHS Launches New Consumer-Friendly Website on Health Reform

On Thursday, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) launched a new website designed to help consumers understand the new health reform law, learn more about insurance options, learn about prevention, and compare health care quality. It is the first website to collect both public and private health insurance options across the nation in a single place. In addition to providing coverage scenarios based on individual circumstances, it also highlights the issues and benefits of the new law for providers. To see more, visit www.healthcare.gov.