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National Cover the Uninsured Week Another Impetus for Action on Healthcare Reform

Washington, D.C. (March 23, 2009) — Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) President and CEO Billy Tauzin today released the following statement regarding this year's National Cover the Uninsured Week:

“Today marks the beginning of a week-long focus on the uninsured crisis we face in America and serves as a reminder of why we must all come together and find solutions to help ensure that nobody falls through the cracks. This week also presents an opportunity for the public to echo the message that they won't stand for inaction on comprehensive healthcare reform this year.

“Since President Obama called upon the nation to be active participants in the health reform process, we have witnessed something extraordinary – a broad, open and honest dialogue on what works in health care, what doesn't work and how we can bridge that gap.

“America's pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies are committed to finding solutions to the health care crisis and also recognize the fact that all stakeholders are going to have to step up to the plate and engage in meaningful dialogue to accomplish our shared goals.

“PhRMA has been working with a diverse groups of stakeholders on healthcare reform efforts to help assure that all Americans can access high-quality and affordable healthcare coverage. Until this happens, uninsured Americans should know there is help out there for those who qualify through the Partnership for Prescription Assistance (PPA). Nearly four years ago, PPA was formed to raise awareness of patient assistance programs offered by America's pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies. Since then, more than 5.5 million uninsured and underinsured Americans have been matched with programs that offer free or nearly-free medicines.

“While PPA is not the solution to the uninsured problem in America, it has surely offered a crutch to those who qualified and needed the most help.

“As we look for more ideas on how to improve the U.S. health care system, it is critical that we remain focused on disease prevention and management. A particular emphasis should be placed on chronic diseases as they are the number one killer in America and leading driver of health care costs.

“PhRMA looks forward to being an active participant in the health reform process to help ensure that a meaningful and comprehensive healthcare reform package gets on the President’s desk this year.”

The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) represents the country’s leading pharmaceutical research and biotechnology companies, which are devoted to inventing medicines that allow patients to live longer, healthier, and more productive lives. PhRMA companies are leading the way in the search for new cures. PhRMA members alone invested an estimated \$50.3 billion in 2008 in discovering and developing new medicines. Industry-wide research and investment reached a record \$65.2 billion in 2008.

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PhRMA Internet Address: <http://www.phrma.org>

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For information on how innovative medicines save lives, visit:

<http://www.innovation.org>

For information on the Partnership for Prescription Assistance, visit:

<http://www.pparx.org>

For information on the dangers of imported drugs, visit:

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