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ISSUE UPDATE



DATE: October 30, 2009
TO: Concerned Parties
FROM: Hilary O. Shelton, Director, Washington Bureau

NAACP–Supported Surgeon General Nominee Regina Benjamin Confirmed by the U.S. Senate

THE ISSUE

On Thursday, October 29, 2009, the United States Senate confirmed Dr. Regina Benjamin to serve as the next United States' Surgeon General. Dr. Benjamin is an inspired choice to serve as “America’s doctor” during this time when the future of our Nation’s health care is in a transformative stage.

A review of Dr. Benjamin’s record demonstrates that she is clearly qualified for the job. She is an intelligent, compassionate physician who has a tremendous amount of first-hand knowledge and experience when it comes to the medical needs of all Americans, and in particular low-income and racial and ethnic minority Americans. Dr. Benjamin is the Founder and CEO of the Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic in Alabama, which aims to provide primary care to people of any age regardless of their financial situation. She previously served as Chair of the Federation of State Medical Boards of the United States, and as the Associate Dean for Rural Health at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine. She also served as President of the Medical Association of Alabama in 2002, becoming the first African-American woman to be president of a state medical society. She was also the first African-American woman and physician under 40 to be elected to the American Medical Association Board of Trustees. She received the Nelson Mandela Award for Health and Human Rights in 1998, among other honors.

The NAACP is convinced that she has the vision, the training and experience to help address the numerous health care issues that face our communities. We celebrate Dr. Benjamin’s confirmation and look forward to working with her on a myriad of issues to improve the health of America.

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