

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

R. BRUCE JOSTEN
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

1615 H STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20062-2000
202/463-5310

July 8, 2013

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Joe Donnelly
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Collins and Donnelly:

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the world's largest business federation representing the interests of more than three million businesses and organizations of every size, sector, and region, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations, and dedicated to promoting, protecting, and defending America's free enterprise system, thanks you for introducing S. 1188, the "Forty Hours is Full Time Act of 2013," which would make the definition of a full-time employee, and a full-time equivalent (FTE), in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) consistent with the traditional 40-hour work week.

Such a definition would decrease the uncertainty the business community is experiencing as they work to comply with the new requirements of the health care law, and would ensure that further damage to the economy is not done during the implementation process.

Because of last week's announcement by the Obama administration of a one-year delay, starting in 2015, businesses with 50 or more FTEs will be required to provide affordable health care coverage to all full-time employees and their dependants or possibly face significant penalties. With regard to this requirement, the PPACA defined a full-time employee as an individual working 30 hours per week averaged over the course of a month. Employers have considered a full-time employee to be one who works 40 hours a week for decades. With the definition as it now stands, many businesses are having to restructure their workforce and reduce their employees' hours to avoid costs that could potentially bankrupt their companies. Not only will many employees not receive health care coverage, but they may also lose their full-time wages as a result.

By reverting back to the traditional definition, employees would be protected and employers would no longer face this barrier to business growth. During this time when our economy is extremely fragile, it is crucial we provide an atmosphere where employers can focus on strengthening their businesses, employing workers in traditional full-time positions, and revitalizing the economy.

The Chamber continues to support health care reform initiatives that build on and reinforce the employer-sponsored system. We look forward to working with you and your

colleagues to enact this critical legislation to protect American jobs and the employers that create them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Bruce Josten". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "R." and last name "Josten" being more prominent than the middle name "Bruce".

R. Bruce Josten