VINCENT C. GRAY
MAYOR

AUG −8 2012

Kathleen Sebelius, Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius,

The importance of the President's goal of ensuring all Americans have access to quality, affordable health care cannot be overstated. In furtherance of this goal, I am quite pleased to provide this Declaration Letter confirming the District of Columbia's ongoing commitment to develop and operate a state-based health benefit exchange, consistent with the authority and requirements of the Affordable Care Act, beginning on October 1, 2013.

At the end of 2011, the D.C. Council unanimously approved the District of Columbia Health Benefit Exchange Authority Establishment Act, creating an independent authority of the D.C. government fully vested with the powers necessary to establish an exchange compliant with all federal requirements. I enthusiastically signed the legislation in January and swore in the Authority's Executive Board members in July of this year. The Authority is governed by an eleven-member board that is meeting on a regular basis to review consultant reports, issue contracts, establish policies and procedures, and hire an Executive Director and staff. The Board has the full support of my administration, including my Medicaid Director and Commissioner for Insurance, Securities, and Banking.

The District's planning and implementation efforts continue to benefit substantially from the guidance and assistance provided by the Federal government. My staff consistently participates in the regular conference calls, seminars, and working groups held by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Continued federal collaboration and support is critical to ensuring the ACA is implemented in the most efficient and effective manner.

The District of Columbia remains a proud partner with the Federal government and I look forward to the opportunity to submit our certification application before the end of 2012.

Sincerely,

Vincent C. Gray