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Dear Senator Mikulski:

On behalf of the American Bar Association, I want to thank you for convening the hearing on October 15, 2009 titled "What Women Want: Equal Benefits for Equal Premiums."

In 1995, the ABA adopted policy urging Congress to "enact legislation to provide that no person or entity could deny insurance benefits solely on the basis of the applicant's status as a victim of domestic violence." At that time, domestic violence was the single largest cause of injury to young adult women. In addition, attorneys were aware that some victims of domestic violence were denied health insurance coverage because their status of being abused was considered a pre-existing condition.

Today, domestic violence continues to be a leading cause of injury to young adult women. And, in several states, it remains legally permissible to deny a woman health insurance coverage because of her status as a survivor of domestic violence.

Women should not be victims of a second battering by being denied health insurance coverage solely on the basis of their status as an abuse victim. We look forward to working with you and other congressional leaders to enact strong legislation to end this form of discrimination.

Sincerely,



Carolyn B. Lamm
President, American Bar Association

