Dear Friends,

As you sit around the seder table with loved ones and hear the story of the exodus, let us each be reminded of the strength there is in numbers. Standing side by side, we can overcome even the most daunting of challenges. That is our history as a people; that is our history as the Reform Jewish Movement; that is the history of the Religious Action Center's ability to mobilize concerned Jews across America to be a forceful voice for justice.

Tuesday among the greatest days in my 35 years representing the Reform Movement in Washington.

When I am asked to describe the satisfactions of heading the Religious Action Center, at the top of the list is the realization that you can work on a piece of important legislation for months, for years – indeed sometimes for decades - then our efforts all come together and that legislation passes. And you realize at that moment that although they will never know your name, never know your organization, you have just made better the lives of tens of millions of people. That realization leaves me with a wonderful mix of pride and humility – and with a sense of awe, at this democratic, open government that is our nation's blessing. I hope all of you who have helped in so many ways to achieve the passage of health care reform share that sense today.

I must admit that I'm a bit shocked to realize that I have been working on health care reform for more than 30 years – for over a generation. It was in 1978 that Ted Kennedy (who was so much in my thoughts yesterday) asked me to help put together an interreligious coalition to support a health care proposal that he and other key members of Congress were putting forward. Five times since then we have launched such coalitional activities as new efforts to achieve universal health care moved in Congress. Throughout it all, the URJ and CCAR helped lead the efforts of the religious community, passing resolutions, mobilizing our synagogues and rabbis, and speaking out in the media.

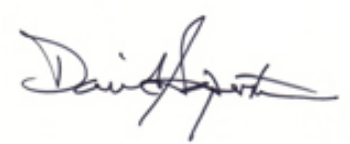
The scene as we reached a culmination of those efforts: At the White House, President Obama was signing the bill, surrounded by Members of Congress. A few blocks away, Mark Pelavin and I, at the invitation of the White House, were gathered with a few hundred leaders representing national organizations that have played key roles in bringing the bill to passage. It was a "who's who" of the social justice community, joined together by key figures in the Administration and Congress. Time and again, we heard expressions of appreciation for what our Movement did – for what **you** did - across the nation. And that appreciation was well deserved. When we co-sponsored the conference call in which President Obama spoke to the urgency of the issue, you responded. When we encouraged you to contact your elected officials, write op-ed pieces, sign our petition to Congress and join with others in the faith community in speaking out, you responded. When we sent out action alerts as crucial Congressional votes came up, you responded. And in these last days, when we made a final push to contact House Members on the final swing lists, boy did you respond!

I was honored that the White House had a seat for me in the second row with members of the Cabinet and a handful of heads of other organizations that they regarded as the most influential and effective across the country. I had the opportunity to briefly greet the President and then the Vice President who said "thank your folks for coming through." And today I do.

This partnership between the URJ, the CCAR, and you has for nearly 50 years been the source of the RAC's strength. We need your continued support to wage these important battles in Washington, DC and wherevever injustice exists.

May we as a Movement truly go from strength to strength.

Best wishes for a *zissen Pesach*, and a Shabbat Shalom,



David Saperstein

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