



## National Health Council

1730 M Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20036-4561 • 202-785-3910 • [www.nationalhealthcouncil.org](http://www.nationalhealthcouncil.org) • [info@nhcouncil.org](mailto:info@nhcouncil.org)

The following letter was sent to the Editor of *Time* magazine on October 26, 2009, in response an article briefly mentioning the National Health Council. The article, titled “How Drug Industry Lobbyists Got Their Way on Health Care,” mentions the NHC in reference to its position on biologics. Please [click here](#) to view the original article.

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October 26, 2009

Dear Editor:

The organization you describe as “calling itself the National Health Council” has an honorable history of serving patients with chronic diseases and disabilities and their family caregivers dating back to 1920. To imply that it is a front organization for the pharmaceutical industry and the industry’s stand on biologics is an opinion not based on research or fact or even an interview with the NHC. (“How Drug Industry Lobbyists Got Their Way on Health Care,” November 2, 2009)

The National Health Council’s position on biologics is a result of a process led by patient organizations, which have majority membership on our policy committees and board of directors. Our position is the result of reasoned discussion and collaboration utilizing a systematic approach that includes patient focus groups, extensive literature review, and thoughtful analysis. Our position is detailed and available on the NHC website for all to see.

The difficult task of determining the appropriate discovery protection period for biologics needs to address ways to encourage the development of much-needed new treatments while also taking into consideration the affordability and accessibility of such products for patients. The debate before Congress gives us a unique opportunity covered in the NHC’s position statement but not mentioned in your article – the chance to develop creative, patient-focused solutions that hopefully will lead to better treatments and cures for conditions with limited or non-existent options, such as ALS or Alzheimer’s.

Sincerely,

Myrl Weinberg, CAE  
President