February 14, 2013

The Honorable Orrin Hatch  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Hatch:

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, supports your recent leadership and efforts to focus the national dialogue on entitlement reform. In light of the continued concern over the federal deficit and national debt, entitlement reform should be at the forefront of policy discussions throughout the 113th Congress.

The Chamber continues to advocate for health care reform that builds on the current employer-sponsored system and that uses market-based solutions to lower costs, improve quality, and protect American jobs and the employers who create them. With health care costs continuing to rise at unsustainable rates, allowing entitlement programs to continue as they are will have a direct effect on the cost and quality of health care for employers and employees alike. Medicare and Medicaid account for a large part of America’s health care expenditures, and entitlement spending will remain uncontrollable until we make fundamental reforms to these programs. These programs not only contribute to federal spending problems, but account for a large part of state budgets that continue to grow out of control.

The Chamber believes that commonsense reforms to entitlement programs such as Medicare and Medicaid would help reduce deficit spending, strengthen the long-term fiscal health of the nation, and protect these programs for future generations. We applaud your leadership on this important issue, and look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

R. Bruce Josten