

Karen Ignagni

Nearly 150 years ago, Bismark observed that politics is the art of the possible. Today, very few individuals at the top of their game in Washington do this better – or with more grace and character and dedication – than Karen Ignagni.

As CEO Of America's Health Insurance Plans, Karen is the chief spokeswoman for the nation's health insurance industry. She is influential in the industry and with Congress, because she has earned a reputation for integrity, for telling the truth, and for helping legislators understand a very complex industry. *The New York Times* writes about her: "In a city teeming with health care lobbyists, Ms. Ignagni is widely considered one of the most effective. She blends a detailed knowledge of health policy with an intuitive feel for politics." In the highly skeptical world of politics, she has made a personal mark reflecting a belief in doing well by doing good.

She has devoted her entire career to bettering the welfare of individuals in the workplace and in the health care marketplace. With health care costs and health reform on everyone's agenda in the next administration, Karen's participation and leadership will be vital to the legislative process of creating new models of efficient, high-quality and broadly available health care for all Americans.

Nurses are precious resources in our current system and in the ways health care will be delivered in the future. Karen is an advocate of nursing, and we are especially in her debt for all she has done to convince the insurance industry – and Congress – of the value of nursing.

Please join me in honoring Karen Ignagni with the Second Century Award for Excellence in Health Care.