

Secretary Kathleen Sebelius
Department of Health and Human Services

Kathleen Sebelius was sworn in as the 21st Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on April 28, 2009. Since taking office, Secretary Sebelius has led ambitious efforts to improve America's health and enhance the delivery of human services to some of the nation's most vulnerable populations, including young children, those with disabilities, and the elderly.

As part of the historic Affordable Care Act, Secretary Sebelius is implementing reforms that end many of the insurance industry's worst abuses, and will help 34 million uninsured Americans get health coverage. Under the law, she is also carrying out policies that put a new focus on wellness and prevention, support the adoption of electronic medical records, and help recruit and train more primary care health providers.

In addition, Secretary Sebelius is working closely with doctors, nurses, hospital leaders, employers, and patients to slow the growth in health care costs through better care and better health. And under her leadership, HHS has formed a historic partnership with the Department of Justice to stamp out health care fraud that has already returned record sums to the Medicare Trust Fund.

Secretary Sebelius is committed to ensuring that America continues to lead the world in innovation. Under her leadership, HHS is promoting public-private collaboration to bring life-saving treatments and medicines to market. The Department is also working to build a 21st century food safety system that will prevent outbreaks before they occur. And it is collaborating with the Department of Education, to help states increase the quality of early childhood education programs, and give parents more information to make the best choices for their children.

Secretary Sebelius also leads the nation's emergency health response to crises and natural disasters, including the Haiti earthquake, the Gulf oil spill, and the Joplin, Missouri tornado. And as America's top health official, she continues to work with our international partners to confront global health issues like polio, HIV/AIDS, and the growing costs of chronic disease around the world.

Forbes has named Secretary Sebelius one of the 100 most powerful women in the world. Before her Cabinet appointment in April, 2009, she served as Governor of Kansas beginning in 2003, where she was named one of America's Top Five Governors by Time Magazine. From 1995 to 2003 she served as Kansas Insurance Commissioner. She was a member of the Kansas House of Representatives from 1987 to 1995.

Secretary Sebelius is the first daughter of a governor to be elected governor in American history; her father John Gilligan served as Ohio's Governor from 1971-75. She holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of Kansas and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Trinity Washington University. She is married to Gary Sebelius, a federal magistrate judge. They have two sons, John and Ned, and a daughter-in-law, Lisa.