The high and growing cost of health care is a significant issue for people, businesses, and government. Spending on health care, which is a projected to be 17.6% of the U.S. gross domestic product (GDP) in 2009, has consistently grown faster than the economy overall since the 1960s. This fact sheet presents some of the key statistics about the level and growth of health care costs and spending in the U.S. Links to additional resources are provided at the end of the document.

Overall Spending
According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the U.S. is projected to spend over $2.5 trillion on health care in 2009, or $8,160 per U.S. resident (Exhibit 1). Health spending in 2009 is projected to account for 17.8% of GDP.

- In 1970, U.S. health care spending was about $75 billion, or $356 per resident, and accounted for 7.2% of GDP.
- Health care spending has risen about 2.4 percentage points faster than GDP since 1970.
- CMS projects that by 2018, health care spending will be over $4.3 trillion, or $13,100 per resident, and account for 20.3% of GDP.

Exhibit 1: National Health Expenditures per Capita, 1990-2018