

10 Reasons Why Single-payer Health Care for Everyone Is Desperately Needed

- 1) In 2008 over 20,000 people will die in the US because they cannot afford the medical care or the prescription drugs they need to stay alive. Those tragic – and preventable – deaths occur year end and year out. They add up to over 200,000 fatalities per decade!
- 2) 50% of all the bankruptcies filed by working class Americans are the result of medical debt *even though 75% were insured at the onset of their illness!*
- 3) 31% of every health care dollar spent in the private sector goes to “administration”. Included in “administration” is advertising, cushy rides on corporate jets for CEOs, and \$1.6 billion (*yes, billion*) worth of stock options to an insurance company executive on top of his multi-million annual salary. What a waste!
- 4) If current trends continue, by the year 2025 the cost of health care for a family will equal the annual wage of an average worker.
- 5) In addition to the grossly bloated takings of the insurance industry, for-profit hospitals and pharmaceutical giants reap huge profits by over-charging patients and/or denying care.
- 6) 47 million Americans lack medical insurance, and twice that many are uninsured for a portion of each year.
- 7) Corporations alibi that medical costs render their products “non-competitive in the global market”. They use that excuse to “justify” closing factories here in the US and moving them offshore. Small businesses that want to provide health insurance for their employees are finding it increasingly difficult to do so.
- 8) The wealthiest Americans are easily able to afford “Cadillac” medical care. Meanwhile, the overwhelming majority of working class families struggle to pay premiums yet wind up with inadequate health care coverage. Everyone should be fully covered for all medically necessary care!
- 9) Profit-driven insurance companies often interfere in patient/doctor decisions, and the result is usually denial of needed care. Our health care decisions should be made by us and our doctors. Period!
- 10) By allowing our people to suffer or die or go without needed medical treatment we forfeit any right to claim we are a moral and just nation

There is an answer. It is HR 676, the United States National Health Insurance Act. It would cover everyone for everything, anywhere and always. (Go to UFHC.org or Healthcare-NOW.org for more information.)

93 Democrats in the US House of Representatives are co-sponsoring the bill. The ILWU and over 450 other labor groups throughout the U.S. have endorsed it too, as have numerous faith-based and community organizations. Rank and file Democrats--in the county, congressional district and state in which I live--are calling for enactment of HR 676. The Democratic representative from my district refuses to co-sponsor the bill. He says he is "looking at several options". He's been saying that for several years! No wonder the approval rating of Congress is down to 9 %. They ignore us and act as if they have all the answers!

Let's not kid ourselves: The lure of hefty campaign financing courtesy of the medical profits industry is driving Congress to do....nothing. On second thought "lure" may not be the right word. "Addiction" would be more appropriate. Either way, Congress continues to demonstrate that it cares more about its medical industry benefactors than it does about working class America.

Sadly, AFL-CIO hierarchy have caved-in to the do-nothing Congress. The Federation, along with True Majority and MoveOn.org, have launched a wholly inadequate health care scheme entitled "Health Care For America Now! (HCAN). HCAN have a "K" Street address in Washington, D.C. "K" Street, as we know, is lobbyist's row.

To compound their retreat, the Federation has attempted to co-opt the name of a group that truly advocates for health care for everyone. That group is Healthcare-NOW!

Don't let Congress get away with ignoring us! Don't let labor "chieftains" get away with it either. Write or phone them! (Email is not effective. A phone call is.) Tell them to get on board HR 676...or else! It is really a matter of life and death. Let's set an example for them by demonstrating that working class people are moral and just.

From what I'm hearing and reading, Federation big shots are catching hell for bowing down to Congress, big business, and the medical industry. The ranks are raising hell! Good!

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