

MichUHCAN

Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network

8846 Robindale, Detroit, MI 49239 * <http://michuhcan.tripod.com>
Detroit Chapter: (248) 548-3019 * State-wide (248) 477-7911

Spring 2004

Fundraiser May 1!

The MichUHCAN fundraiser will feature two episodes of Michael Moore's "The Awful Truth" Moore reveals some terrible truths about our dollar-driven health care system. Come to hear it and support MichUHCAN in its efforts to change the system.

Fundraiser is on Saturday May 1, 2004 at 7:00 PM at UAW Local 909, 5587 Stephens, in Warren. Tickets are \$25.00 per person. Volunteers needed!

Further Details enclosed!

YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER?

Could be, if your dues aren't up to date (check your mailing label).

Charity Care Research Michigan Legal Services

Hospitals across the state claim that they give away millions of dollars in free care every year. This myth hurts our cause because many people believe that the uninsured actually get the health care they need for free. In fact the uninsured do not get primary care and only get free care if they get so ill they have to be taken to the emergency room.

Our research confirmed that fact! It is the policy or practice of every hospital we called to make sure a person is so ill that they come in through the ER.

A volunteer called hospital admissions departments and explained that he or she was unemployed and uninsured, but that the primary care physician said a gall bladder removal was needed. Could we make payment plans, or have free care because of the situation? The answer from every hospital was "No!"

The most humane was a system that required us to go to a federally funded clinic first and then they would take the case, but not as charity care. They would try to get government payment or make the patient pay.

Other hospitals asked for money up front before they would consider doing the surgery. One wanted between \$3000 and \$4000 up front!

Charity care systems do exist in other states. There a hospital must provide a certain amount of free care every year because of their non-profit status. The hospital systems of Southeast Michigan are billion dollar a year corporations that pay no property or corporate taxes because of the non-profit status the state gives them.

So if someone tells you everyone can get free health care in this country, tell them to call their local hospital and try it! It only works if you are in such a terrible state that you go to the emergency room, and then all they have to do is 'stabilize you'.

Join MichUHCAN!

Be part of the health care solution. Return this form with **\$20 dues** (\$5 low in-come). **MichUHCAN, 8846 Robindale, Detroit, MU 48239**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (H) _____ Email _____

In House Production

Bulk Drug Buying Bill

MichUHCAN has been working hard to pass HB 4151 and HB4289. These two bills call for the Governor to buy pharmaceuticals in bulk for the uninsured and allow her to form consortiums with others states to buy in bulk, as well. Many of you have already signed a card to State Rep. Stephen R. Ehardt, the Chair of the House Health Policy Committee, asking that hearings be held on these bills. 1,000 of those cards have been sent to Rep. Ehardt including 200 from his district in Sanilac County. Marylyn Schmidt, Maurice Geary, Maggie Tyson and Pat Cason should be thanked for spending a day in Sanilac County collecting signatures on the cards outside post offices and at a Senior Center.

The Governor has assured MichUHCAN's president, Marjorie Mitchell, that she will sign the bills if passed.

And now Rep. Ehardt has promised hearings! He did this in a meeting with MichUHCAN's Dr. David Green, Mary Tuttle, and Gary Benjamin.

A legislative workgroup was formed to discuss the bills and it was attended by Mary Tuttle and Gary Benjamin for MichUHCAN. Our representatives were the only consumers there though the drug companies were there in force, with several lobbyists being present. State Rep. Aldo Vagnozi was present arguing for HB4289 which he sponsors and representatives of Rep. David Woodward's office were there arguing for HB4151 which Mr. Woodward sponsors.

We intend to keep watching this process and participating in it. Mr. Ehardt not only promised MichUHCAN hearings but has written letters to several of his constituents that signed the post cards promising the same. We believe that both parties will support these bills and in the end we will have lower drug prices for Michiganders!!

Call, write, or email your State Representative about these bills so we can get them passed quickly!

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Send checks to Selma Goode, 8846 Robindale, Detroit, Mi 48239.
Call Marylyn Schmidt for more information, or to volunteer, at 248-674-3520.

Come and hear the report about the year's accomplishments!!

March 4 is Health Care Action Day

Enclosed are three stickers for you and two friends to wear on health care action day! Jobs With Justice declared the day and MichUHCAN endorses it. **Wear yours to work or school or just around town!**

Watch for the press conference in which MichUHCAN will participate at the Cabrini Clinic on March 4th.

Health Care Finance Resolution

MichUHCAN has been asking governments to pass a resolution calling on the governor to establish a health care finance commission. Several states, the latest being Missouri, which have studied the financing of health care in their states have found that there is enough money in the system to pay for health insurance for everyone in their state. We want Michigan to explore this as well.

The resolution was presented by John Espinoza and considered by the Sanilac County Board of Commission on February 24th, 2004. It passed unanimously. It was forwarded to the Michigan Association of Counties for the consideration of all the other counties in the state and by the Association.

The resolution was also considered by the Farmington Hills City Council and passed on February 25, 2004. It was first passed by the Detroit City Council.

These three councils have all passed the resolution with no one in opposition. One is urban; one suburban; and one rural. Republicans and Democrats alike have supported this idea. We are enclosing a copy of the Sanilac County resolution and **asking all members to get their county commission, city council, or village or township governments to pass this resolution and forward it to the governor's office.** We ask that you send a copy to Michigan Legal Services c/o Gary Benjamin at 220 Bagley; Suite 900; Detroit, Mi. 48226.

Every County, City, Township, Village, School Board or other governmental body in the State should pass a version of this resolution if they care about the uninsured!

Health Care as a Civil Right Lawsuit

The Power Point presentation on this lawsuit is available for groups. If interested call Gary Benjamin at 313-964-4130 x.229. Presentations are already scheduled as follows:

February 23, 2004	N. Oakland NAACP	7 PM
March 26, 2004	WSU AMSA	Noon
April 7, 2004	WSU – Law School	3 PM
April 7, 2004	Green House	7 PM
April 20, 2004	MSU-DCL Law School	7 PM

The presentation has been made to several other groups.

The lawsuit will be filed in April or May and alleges that the State of Michigan has a duty to provide at least a plan to give access to, or coverage for, health care to all segments of the state's population.