

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

Winter 2003

Fundraiser May 1

At UAW local 909
on Stephans Road
in Warren. Tickets
are \$25.

Steering Committee Meetings:

Friday January 9
Friday February 6
Friday March 5
Friday April 2
Friday May 7
Friday June 4
Friday July 9
Friday August 6
Friday Sept. 3
Friday October 1
Friday Nov. 5
Friday Dec. 3

All meetings start at
3:00 PM, and
meetings are held
at:

Livingston County
Offices-East
2300 East Grand
River
Howell, Michigan
Conference Room
B

YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER?

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

Health Care as a Civil Right Lawsuit

The State of Michigan declares, in Article 4, section 51, of its Constitution that the public health of the people of the state is a matter of "...primary public concern." Yet we have seen the state take actions in the past that show that the state government does not take this "concern" very seriously. The State has closed down public hospitals in Detroit (Detroit General; Wayne County General; LaFayette Clinic; and the psychiatric wing of Herman Kieffer).

The State set up a Medicaid HMO system which is the most underfunded in the country. (That's right, we are below Mississippi!!) The Hospital Association has said, since the HMO system was established in the mid-1990's, that it is actuarially unsound. As a result hospitals which serve a high proportion of Medicaid patients are in trouble because they don't get paid for their service even at Medicare rates. Three of the HMO's have gone bankrupt and one hospital says it gthat only about 47% of the actual cost of their service is reimbursed.

The State agreed with the Federal government to provide protective services, called EPSDT, to 80% of the Medicaid eligible children in the state. Only about 40% have ever received those services.

There is supposed to be a statewide plan to provide "...adequate access to health care for all segments of the state's population." MCL 325.2001 and EO's following it. Michigan Legal Services has asked for a copy of the plan and received a response from the Governor's office that there is none. The Department of Community Health has sent the last plan, from 1991!

Because of all these problems, and others, MichUHCAN has agreed to be a plaintiff in a lawsuit to declare health care a civil right under the state's Constitution. If your group is interested and did not attend on the 22nd call Marjorie Mitchell at (248) 477-7911 or Gary Benjamin at 313-964-4130 ext. 29 for more information.

We believe we can win this and get a court ordered plan to provide health care for all!!

Join MichUHCAN!

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

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (H) _____ Email _____

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Sample Resolution:

Whereas, studies done in other states have found that there is enough money in the health system of those states to provide adequate health insurance for every citizen of that state; and

Whereas, the same appears to be true in Michigan, that is that there is enough money in the health care system to provide health insurance for all the citizens of our state; and

Whereas, because of the manner in which the health care delivery system is funded, and because the administrative costs of the system as it is presently structured, the money is ineffectively and unwisely spent; and

Whereas, our citizens are increasingly losing coverage because of the cost of insurance to employers and to government; and

Whereas the Michigan economy is losing jobs faster than the rest of the country which is causing our citizens to lose health insurance coverage; and

Whereas, health is declared to be a "primary public concern" according to our state constitution [Article 4, Section 51]; and

Whereas under our laws the state is supposed to create a plan to provide access to health care to all segments of society; [MCL 325.2010 (2)];

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

We, _____ [Council or Commission name] hereby call on Governor Granholm to establish a commission to study the financing of health care in Michigan and to make recommendations to change that financing so that all people in Michigan shall have health insurance in a system which is affordable; cost efficient; provides comprehensive benefits; promotes prevention and early intervention; eliminates disparities in access and in mental health care; provides continuity of care (is portable from one job to another)); protects consumer choice; and, is easy to use.

We believe that working together we can produce such a system and we consider it to be a high priority for the citizens of _____.

REGARDING CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON HEALTH CARE FINANCING

On Wednesday, October 22, 2003 the Detroit City Council passed a resolution calling on Governor Granholm to establish a commission to study health care financing in the state. The resolution points out that there is probably enough money going into the system to provide health care for all "...because of costs, administrative and other, and because of the manner in which the health care delivery system is funded, the money is ineffectively and unwisely spent. ..." The resolution was proposed by City Council President Pro Tem Ken Cockrel at the request of the Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network (MichUHCAN).

The Council points that Detroit and the African-American population that lives there bears the brunt of the lack of health care because there are over 180,000 people in Detroit who have no insurance. Detroit has lost hospitals and primary care facilities in the last few years, which is leading to more illness and death. The Detroit City

Council declares that it "... considers this a matter of top priority."

The resolution follows earlier efforts to have such a commission established. In February of 2003. Gary Benjamin, Staff Attorney for Michigan Legal Services, write the Governor, who had just taken office, pointing out that the amount of money going into our health care system is enough to fund health insurance for all. Other states have done economic studies that have come to the same conclusion for those states. California and Maine have recently acted on just such studies passing legislation that those states hope leads to insurance for all. MichUHCAN endorsed this approach and retiree groups and others have written the Governor in support of such a commission in the last few months. Earlier, in the Spring Council President Pro Tem Ken Cockrel wrote the Governor making the same request. In October, Marjorie Mitchell and Pat McCarthy, of MichUHCAN and UAWCAP, met with the Governor and her aides requesting that a grant proposal to the Federal Government (a HRSA Planning grant) be written so the money could be used for the purpose of analyzing the financing of the health care system and working out ways to use the finances already going into the system to provide universal coverage.

The verbal response from the Governor has been that such a commission or study will not be done.

MichUHCAN calls on all its member organizations to contact the Governor's office in support of this effort. Or use the attached resolution with your own City Council, County Commission, or other local government. Get it adopted and sent to Lansing! If we work together we can win health care for all of us in Michigan