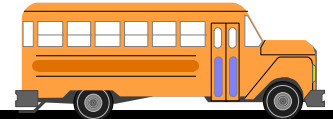




OPEIU LOCAL #9 Newsletter



Candy Johnson, President - local9candy@sbcglobal.net

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PLEASE NOTE MEETING LOCATION

**General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, September 15, 2009
6:00 p.m.**

**Ironworker's Local 8 Hall
12034 West Adler Lane
Milwaukee, WI**

**From Business Manager Dawn
Martin & President Candy Johnson**

Heal the Health Care System Now!

Everyone should know these facts. One, for the last eight years, health insurance premiums have grown four times faster than wages. Two, out of what employers pay each year to provide their workers with health care benefits, \$1,000 of it—and that's per worker—goes toward providing care for the 46 million Americans who are uninsured. Three, health care costs have become an obstacle in almost all contract negotiations. Often times wages increases are given up in order to maintain decent health care benefits.

What does all this mean? From people like us who, for the most part have a good insurance plan we can depend on, to the uninsured, American's access to quality, affordable health care is a problem that affects us all.

President Obama has promised to fix our health care system and has provided us with a roadmap to do just that. We must stand by him, ensure that bad proposals do not take hold and fight anyone who thinks it is a good idea to tax our health care benefits.

With 16 percent of our economy devoted to health care, fixing the system won't be easy. The special interests will fight us every step of the way. All one has to do is look and see that opponents to this plan have spent \$1 billion dollars on their lobbying efforts.

Pledging to guarantee quality affordable health care for all, President Obama said that benefits for any plan must be comprehensive and affordable. He promised that employers would share in financing coverage, or have other options, including a public health insurance plan.

The benefits of a public option are many. First, it would save money--\$3 trillion over 10 years. Further, it would boost patients' access to quality care. It's also reliable. Whatever happens with private insurance, public health insurance will be there.

We cannot wait any longer for reform of our existing health insurance system. Since 2001, eight million Americans have lost their health insurance. If we do nothing, the whole health care system will implode.

For more information on this important fight and to join in the efforts, visit MakeAmericaHappen.com. We want quality, affordable health care for all and we want it *now!*

Separate Fact from Fiction in the Health Care Debate

With lawmakers home for their August and Labor recess, a huge battle has broken out over what precisely is in the mammoth health care bills being pushed in Washington. Here is a look at a few of the most contentious parts of the legislation, based on the responses at public forums held by our lawmakers.

Q. Does the legislation include provisions to encourage senior citizens to commit suicide?

No. This has become one of the most misleading, inflammatory claims made in the entire debate and is advanced by conservative commentators and Republican lawmakers working to stoke fears among seniors.

One Congressman suggested that the bill would put seniors in a position of being put to death by their government. There is NO such provision.

The House bill would give seniors on Medicare the option to sit down with a doctor for an “advance health care planning consultation” every five years to discuss options should they become seriously ill or unable to make medical decisions. Topics could include the development of a living will and directives for care.

These are important discussions that everyone should have so they are fully informed and can make their wishes known. It is plain, old-fashioned patient-centered care.

Q. Will illegal immigrants receive free health care benefits?

Provisions in the House and Senate bills specifically prohibit people who are not lawfully present in the United States from receiving federal aid to help them buy health insurance in the new system.

Q. Will the government ration care?

While this is almost impossible to say, if the legislation passes, there may actually be less rationing than there is now.

Under our current system, private insurers and the federal government put a variety of limits on what kinds of medical procedures, imaging and drugs they will pay for.

Millions of people with pre-existing conditions face even more limits, as they are often rejected when attempting to obtain coverage. Both bills prohibit insurers from denying coverage to anyone with a pre-existing condition, thus eliminating one form of rationing in our current system.

A cornerstone of the overhaul is a larger role for the government in introducing more standards to the system to regulate coverage and expand information about the most effective treatments.

The legislation would also give the government the authority to set minimum benefits levels that insurers would have to offer in order to sell policies in the new exchanges. This would mean more coverage for millions of individuals and many small businesses that are currently shut out of the health care system.

As always if you have any problems do not hesitate to call or email the office.

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