

The Honorable Bill Monning,  
State Capitol, Room 6005  
Sacramento, CA 95814

May 25, 2010

Dear Assembly Member Monning,

I am writing to convey the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of California's continued strong support for universal health care, single payer, and for SB 810, the California Universal Health Care Act. We urge your support for this important legislation and request your hard work bringing it to the Governor's desk this year.

Our faith affirms the following Guiding Principles:

- 1) Good Health is essential for all life.
- 2) Access to affordable, quality health care is a fundamental human right.

Also see below the "*UULM-CA Principles on Healthcare Reform*".

Federal health reform passage has greatly increased the importance of California's immediate advocacy for universal health care. Single payer systems, of which there are many models, are the only guarantee of universal coverage. SB 810 will dramatically reduce premiums for businesses and families, will cover all medically necessary health care, will eliminate the risk of medical bankruptcy, and is proven to contain health care spending over the long term. Importantly, SB 810 will save California businesses and state and local government millions of dollars in employee health care costs and is the only plan that responsibly funds retiree health care.

Around the world, every wealthy nation except the United States achieves universal health care through some variation of a single payer or non-profit model of health care. All other nations spend far less GNP than the U. S. and in return receive higher quality care. Californian families and employers can no longer afford to foolishly waste 30% of every health care dollar on a private health insurance bureaucracy designed to minimize the payment of claims instead of maximizing the health of the people. It is a fundamental right of individuals and communities to strive for optimal health.

SB 810 would dramatically increase patient choice and provider competition by guaranteeing every Californian total choice over his or her doctors and hospitals instead of the narrow provider networks that restrict choice today. SB 810 would significantly lower health premiums for businesses and families that are struggling to pay unaffordable premiums that rise as much as 40% every year. This legislation will help middle and lower income families and businesses that are the backbone of California's economy. SB 810 will create jobs, ease the burden on California's budget and improve health care for every single Californian. We urge your support.

Sincerely,

The Rev. Lindi Ramsden, Executive Director  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of California

## *UULM-CA Principles on Healthcare Reform*

### **Our Unitarian Universalist Faith is grounded in:**

- **justice, equity and compassion for all people.**
- **respect for the inherent dignity of the individual and the interdependence of all life.**
- **the free and responsible search for truth and meaning.**
- **and the essential role of transparent democratic processes in reaching just and responsible decisions.**

### **And our Faith affirms the following Guiding Principles:**

- **good Health is essential for all life.**
- **access to affordable, quality health care is a fundamental human right.**

### **GIVEN THESE PREMISES WE COVENANT TO WORK TOWARD REACHING THE FOLLOWING GOALS:**

**1 UNIVERSAL COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE:** Ensure access to **quality health care and coverage at affordable costs for all Californians.** We hold as essential the provision of Quality Universal Healthcare with coverage for all members of our community. Coverage should include the most vulnerable (who are least able to inform and participate in public policy); including children and students, very low, low and moderate wage employees (irrespective of documentation status), people seeking employment, people with “pre-existing conditions,” the homeless, and those with special disabilities, rare diagnoses and chronic illness. This quality healthcare should also be comprehensive, including medical, dental, vision, mental health and prescription services.

**2 INSURER OVERSIGHT:** Establish oversight including stronger rules regulating insurers to **elevate standards for coverage that preserve and increase consumer protections for all Californians.**

**3 LARGE PURCHASING POOLS FOR ALL** that allow consumers to share risk, as opposed to efforts to shift risk and place financial burdens and barriers on individual consumers and families.

**4 SINGLE PAYER INSURANCE SYSTEM:** Work towards the development of a non-profit single payer system, which dramatically cuts administrative waste for both providers and patients alike.

**5. PRESERVATION OF OUR SAFETY NETS:** including community and public health clinics, mental health and dental clinics, and public hospitals on which we all rely, especially people who are left out of the system and without coverage.

**6. SUPPORT FOR BOTH THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING** of the population, including an emphasis on preservation of health and prevention of illness.

**7. COST CONTAINMENT:** Support cost containment focused on prevention, safety, efficiency, transparency, and group purchasing so that consumers pay less and get more.

**8. DIVERSITY AND EQUITY:** Meet the specific needs of the full diversity of California, toward equity and access for all. Any health care system should include language accessibility and address cultural diversity.

**STRATEGIC STEPS:** Given that the existing private, for profit health care insurance system has failed to satisfy these principles, and since other systems in other countries are providing a broader coverage at lower cost and have better indices of population health, the benefit of their experience should be incorporated in our move forward. Urgent reform should be undertaken toward the goal of a comprehensive, universal health system, like Medicare for all.

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*We pledge to do the following:*

*Educate our congregations about these points, collaborate with others to achieve these aims, promote reform and advocate assertively for these principles.*

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