February 2, 2004

Dear Member of Congress,

Please make a commitment to health care for all.

Over the past eight years, Congress repeatedly has addressed health policy for parts of the population – the newly unemployed, low-income children, customers of HMOs, Medicare beneficiaries, and so on. The time has come to agree that all Americans should enjoy access to good health care.

In the late 90s – even with a strong economy and a federal budget surplus – access to affordable comprehensive health care was becoming harder. Now, with a struggling economy and a record federal deficit, the strains in American health care are growing increasingly visible. Even those with employer health benefits are increasingly forced to pay more for less coverage.

A variety of specific proposals have been made to fix the problems of health care cost and access. They reflect a growing consensus that action is needed to address the health care crisis. Progress appears stymied by disagreements over exactly how this crisis should be resolved. We, the undersigned believe that what the nation needs now is a commitment from Congress to approach health care for everybody with a sense of urgency.

We ask you, therefore, to become a cosponsor of the **Health Care Access Resolution – House Concurrent Resolution 99, Senate Concurrent Resolution 41** – by the end of March 2004. The Resolution does not endorse a specific plan. Rather, it lays out principles necessary for any plan to be efficient, just, and sustainable. This resolution commits Congress to begin a meaningful public debate very soon on how to provide affordable access to health care for all, and to pass a comprehensive health care plan by October 2005, one year after the Presidential election. Your cosponsorship of this Resolution will signify that you recognize the urgency of finding a truly comprehensive solution to America's health care crisis.

In addition to this letter, individuals and groups from the endorsing organizations will be sending you personal messages and making visits to your offices. Please make a commitment to a healthy America now. Sign on as a cosponsor of the Health Care Access Resolution by contacting Joel Segal in Congressman John Conyers' office, 225-5126 or Dora Hughes in Senator Kennedy's office, at 224-7675.

Attachments:

Organizational signatories of this letter
Text of the Health Care Access Resolution, H Con Res 99, S Con Res 41
Abridged Executive Summary of *Insuring America's Health: Principles and Recommendations* from the Institute of Medicine

NATIONAL GROUPS

Alliance for Retired Americans
American Medical Student Association
American Medical Women's Association
American Public Health Association
Americans for Democratic Action
Association of Academic Health Centers
Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO)
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU)
Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)
Association of Retired Americans
Center for Economic and Social Rights
Center on Disability and Health
Children's Defense Fund
Church Women United
Communications Workers of American (CWA)
Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust
Consumers Union
Families USA
Interfaith Voices for Peace & Justice
Islamic Society of North America
JMA Brain Trauma Recovery & Policy Institute
Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.
League of Women Voters of the U.S.
Mennonite Central Committee, U.S.
Mennonite Nurses Association
Men's Health Network
Midwives Alliance of North America
NAACP
National Alliance of Postal and Federal Employees
National Association of Community Health Centers
National Association of Public Hospitals & Health Systems
National Association of Social Workers
National Center for Farmworker Health
National Coalition for the Homeless
National Coalition of Mental Health Professionals and Consumers, Inc.
National Community Reinvestment Coalition
National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA
National Council on Interpreting in Health Care
National Dental Association
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
National Health Law Program, Inc.
National Hispanic Medical Association
National Medical Association
National Policy & Advocacy Council on Homelessness
National Women's Health Network
NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
North American Registry of Midwives
Older Women's League (OWL)
Out of Many, One
Presbyterian Church (USA) Washington Office
Screen Actors Guild
Summit Health Institute for Research and Education, Inc.
The Title II Community AIDS National Network
Union for Reform Judaism
United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE)
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
Universal Health Care Action Network (UHCAN)
Universal Living Wage Campaign
University of Philippines Nursing Alumni Association International
USAction
White Lung Association
Women's Health Institute
Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring

STATE AND REGIONAL GROUPS

AK Alaska Primary Care Association
AL Alabama Primary Care Association
AR Community Health Centers of Arkansas
CA California Primary Care Association
CA "Gray Panthers, California"
CA Health Access
CA Health Care for All - California
CA Stop Our Shootings
CO Colorado Community Health Network
CO Colorado Progressive Coalition
CT Connecticut Call to Action
CT Connecticut Primary Care Association
DC District of Columbia Primary Care Association
DE Delaware A. Philip Institute
DE/MD Mid-Atlantic Primary Health Care Association
FL Community Health Action Information Network (CHAIN)
FL Community Health Advocacy Partnership
FL Florida Association of Community Health Centers
FL Florida Consumer Action Network
GA "Georgia Association for Primary Health Care, Inc."
GA National Association of Social Workers – Georgia Chapter
IA National Association of Social Workers - Iowa Chapter
IA/NE Iowa/Nebraska Primary Care Association
ID Idaho Primary Care Association
IL Campaign for Better Health Care
IL Illinois Primary Health Care Association
IL St. Leonard's Ministries
KS National Association of Social Workers - Kansas Chapter
KY Kentucky Primary Care Association
MD Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative - Health Care for All
ME Consumers for Affordable Health Care
ME Maine People's Alliance
ME Maine Primary Care Association
ME National Association of Social Workers - Maine Chapter
MI Michigan Primary Care Association
MI MichUHCAN
MN Minnesota Coalition for Health Care Justice
MN Minnesota Primary Care Association
MN Minnesota Universal Health Care Coalition
MO Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - Central States Synod
MS Mississippi Human Services Coalition
NC North Carolina Primary Health Care Association
ND/SD Community Health Care Association of the Dakotas
NH/VT Bi-State Primary Care Association
NJ Health Care for All/New Jersey
NJ New Jersey Primary Care Association
NM Health Action New Mexico
NV Great Basin Primary Care Association
NY Community Health Care Association of New York State
NY Midstate Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO
NY New York State Health Care Campaign
OH Ohio Council of Churches
OH Universal Health Care Action Network of Ohio
OK Oklahomans for Universal Health Care
OR Health Care for All-Oregon
OR Oregon Health Action Campaign
OR Oregon Primary Care Association
PA National Association of Social Workers - Pennsylvania Chapter
RI Coalition for Consumer Justice
RI Rhode Island Health Center Association
SC Pennsylvania Forum for Primary Health Care
SC South Carolina Primary Care Association
TN Rural Health Association of Tennessee
TN Tennessee Health Care Campaign
TN Tennessee Primary Care Association
TX Health Care for All Texas
TX Texas Association of Community Health Centers, Inc.
UT Association for Utah Community Health
UT Coalition of Religious Communities
VA National Association of Social Workers - Virginia Chapter
VA Virginia Primary Care Association
VT Vermont Citizens Campaign for Health
WA Health Care for All Washington
WA Washington Association of Community and Migrant Health Centers
WV West Virginia Primary Care Association

LOCAL GROUPS

CA Community Action Marin, Inc.
CA Health Care for All - Sacramento Valley
CA Health Care for All - Sacramento Valley
CA Independent Living Resource Center - San Francisco
CA Philippine Nurses Association of Southern California

CA Stop Our Shootings
CO Communications Workers of America Local 7777
DC Greater Washington Coalition of Mental Health Professionals & Consumers
FL Democratic Women's Club of Manatee County
FL Human Services Coalition of Dade County, Inc.
FL League of Women Voters of Manatee County
FL Manatee Democrats in Action Club
FL Treasure Coast CHAIN LINC
FL Whelchel Medical Consultants, Inc.
ID Student Health Information Management
IL San Jose Obrero Mission - Chicago
KS Lawrence Coalition for Peace & Justice
MD Baltimore Health Care Access
MD Violettville United Methodist Church
NC Greene County Health Care, Inc.
NC Lincoln Community Health Center
NC Robeson Health Care Corporation
NC Wake Health Services, Inc.
NY Citizens for Universal Health Care
NY Communications Workers of America Local 1133
NY Communications Workers of America Local 1168
NY Greater Rochester Interfaith Health Care Coalition
NY Haitian Centers Council
NY Metro New York Health Care for All
NY Public Health Association of New York City
NY Suffolk County Psychological Association
NY Tompkins County Health Care Access Task Force
NY Tompkins County Religious Action for Universal Health Care Coverage Group
OH Project H.O.P.E.- St. Philip Neri Catholic Church - Cleveland
OH Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine
PA Philadelphia Area Committee to Defend Health Care
TX House the Homeless, Inc.

This letter was coordinated by Bridging Coalitions: Communities United for Universal Health Care, a coalition of national organizations working together to develop ongoing mass education and mobilization campaigns in support of universal health care.

For more information, please contact: Braden Hexom, American Medical Student Association, 703/620-6600, X-221; Dan Hawken, National Association of Community Health Centers, 202/296-3800; James Christian, National Medical Association; 202/207-1537; or, Ken Frisof, MD, Universal Health Care Action Network 800/634-4442, X-16.