

## PRESS BACKGROUNDER

### STATEWIDE GRASSROOTS COALITION CAMPAIGN for "CALIFORNIA ONECARE" SINGLE PAYER, SB 810 (LENO)

The statewide California OneCare grass roots campaign is devoted to educating Californians and building massive support for **Senate Bill 810**, named "California OneCare" and authored by Senator Mark Leno.

This landmark legislation provides fiscally sound, affordable and comprehensive coverage via publicly funded, universal health insurance for all Californians.

The bill creates one plan with its own public trust fund (called a single-payer system) that pays all health care bills and collects all the monies already being spent on health care insurance plans. When enacted, SB 810 will replace all health premiums, taxes, deductibles and co-payments now paid by employers, employees and individuals with one affordable premium paid to the public trust fund which, when in place, will save money for families, businesses, and government.

SB 810 proposes a simple but profound change: replace for-profit health insurance with a single-payer insurance system (like Medicare).

Michael Moore's "SiCKO," and other media coverage, including PBS's Frontline presentation of "Sick Around the World" and recently, *Bill Moyers Journal*, are exposing the facts: we can cover all Californians with full care, for life, and do it for less.

Recent polls show that 60% of physicians support a universal health insurance plan like SB 810. And nearly 70% of Americans polled prefer a government financed system, even if it means higher taxes.<sup>1</sup>

#### **A Grassroots Campaign:**

A non-profit, non partisan citizen group, Health Care for All-California, started the California OneCare grassroots campaign in 2006 and has been joined by many other organizations committed to single-payer universal healthcare. While SB 810 will likely again be vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger in August 2010, the organization has developed a comprehensive plan to show legislators that public demand for single payer reform is fierce and undeterred.

On August 28, 2007, a previous version of SB 810 passed both houses of the California legislature in an historic vote. On September 22, 2007, after taking \$4 million from the insurance industry, Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed SB 840 on the grounds that "healthcare is not a right." Throughout 2007 Governor Schwarzenegger unsuccessfully promoted his own healthcare reform proposal to increase insurance coverage.

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<sup>1</sup> CNN poll (5/4-5/6/07), 64 percent of respondents supported the idea that "government should provide a national health insurance program for all Americans, even if this would require higher taxes." A CBS/New York Times poll (2/23-27/07) found 64 percent support for the idea that the federal government should "guarantee health insurance for all," and 60 percent supported paying higher taxes to provide such coverage.

His final version was supported by Democratic leadership at the time but failed to pass the Senate Health Committee in January 2008. The result: the Governor's urgent calls for health care reform have gone silent.

It is probable that Governor Schwarzenegger will dismiss SB 810 as "socialized medicine" and veto the bill again this summer. But this year, unlike previous years, we have hundreds of thousands of supporters for SB 810 who will not let this happen without a major political fight.

### **Basic SB 810 benefits:**

**Security** - **ALL** California residents are covered for life.

**Choice** - **Everyone** has the freedom to choose any doctor or integrated HMO delivery system such as Kaiser. Under this single payer plan, health care delivery is in the private sector.

**Comprehensive Benefits** - Coverage includes **ALL** care prescribed by a patient's health care provider that meets accepted standards of care and practice. Coverage includes hospital, medical, surgical, mental health, dental and vision care, prescription drugs, medical equipment, diagnostic testing, hospice care and more.

**High Quality** - The bill utilizes proven financial incentives that support the delivery of high quality care, including bonuses for providers working in rural or under-served areas. The plan invests in needed health care infrastructure such as electronic claims and reimbursement systems and statewide medical databases that improve health care quality.

**Efficient Administration** - Consolidating the hundreds of insurance plans, both private and public, into one comprehensive insurance plan will save the state, patients and providers billions of dollars each year (\$8 billion dollars in the first year alone and over \$350 billion over a ten year period, according to a 2005 [Lewin Group Study<sup>2</sup>](#) ).

**Shared Responsibility** – - Employers and employees pay a modest health care premium, which is less than most pay now.

**Fair Reimbursement** – Providers will receive fair, full, and timely compensation for all their services.

**Cost Controls** - Health care inflation is controlled by collectively negotiated payment rates for providers, efficient administration, bulk purchase of drugs and durable medical equipment, global health care budgets, coordination of capital expenditures, and linkage to growth of the state Gross Domestic Product.

### **The California OneCare Campaign**

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<sup>2</sup> The Health Care for All Californians Act: Cost and Economic Impacts Analysis. January 19, 2005, Lewin Group Report.

**Introduction:** Initiated by Health Care for All-California and the California School Employees Association, a coalition of organizations has joined together to conduct a statewide campaign in support of single payer legislation called California OneCare. The campaign will consist of coordinated grassroots activities including demonstrations, marches, street theater, and more; netroots appeals designed to inform and inspire support for single payer via blogs, news links, and an exciting new “365 Ad Campaign” (see below); entertainment industry events such as concerts and comedy nights; and coordinated, focused political pressure to elect officials that will pass a single payer bill.

### **The Coalition: The State Strategy Group for SB 810 :**

Members of the State Strategy Group for SB 810, Single Payer Healthcare include:

League of Women Voters of California  
California School Employees Association  
California Nurses Association  
California Physicians' Alliance  
California Alliance for Retired Americans  
California Teachers Association  
Consumer Federation of California  
California Church IMPACT of the California Council of Churches  
California Federation of Teachers  
California Retired Teachers Association  
Delores Huerta Foundation  
American Medical Student Association-UCSF Chapter  
Wellstone Democratic Renewal Club  
California Faculty Association  
Gray Panthers California  
Progressive Democrats of America  
Progressive Caucus of the Democratic Party of California  
Single Payer Now  
Health Care for All-California 36 Chapters

### **The 2010 California OneCare “365 Ad Campaign” Goals:**

**Introduction:** The California OneCare 365 Ad Campaign is an unprecedented grassroots using the Internet and traditional media to promote passage of single-payer healthcare legislation in California as soon as possible.

**A 365 Day Netroots/Grass Routes Awareness Campaign:** Our coalition will kick off a 365 Ad Campaign on March 1, 2010. From the first day of the launch, a new, 30-second video ad will appear on the CaliforniaOneCare.org website and distributed on-line to millions of supporters each and every day for a year – gaining momentum during California’s June primary elections and peaking during the November 2010 General Election for Governor, Assembly and Senate.

**A powerful new :30 second Ad every day:** The initial Ads will be produced by Health Care for All-California. Subsequently, anyone and everyone will be invited to produce ads for the campaign. Submissions will be received via the Internet and the best spots will be posted on the campaign website as well as coalition partner websites. Commercials will also be created by single-payer advocacy groups and individuals in California and across the nation. Detailed instructions about format, timing, and suggested content ideas will be available at the CaliforniaOneCare.org coalition website.

**365 TV Ads – One Powerful Single Payer Message.** Ads will cover hundreds of topics and we'll urge all creators to use their imaginations, but the unifying mission of the campaign is to educate all Californians that single payer – and elimination of private insurance – is the simple and inevitable solution to the health care crisis.

**Etching an indelible impression on voters and elected officials.** To help them get the message, every spot will include the California OneCare logo and a unique sound tag when it is posted on the CaliforniaOneCare.org website and/or run on TV stations.

**Mass participation and mass media:** A 365 Campaign contest will reward the best ad for the month. Top ads will be placed on paid TV, radio, or print, based upon funding.

**Suggested Monthly Themes:** A different theme is proposed for each month and ad topics are also suggested on the following pages. However, the campaign will be flexible and open to any alternative ad ideas and approaches that fit our overarching mission.

**Grassroots OneCare “TEAMS” in Zip Codes:** Concurrently, “OneCare Teams” of volunteers in zip codes across the state will be engaged in advocacy, activism, and fundraising for the Campaign.

**The Single-Payer Arguments: Senate Bill 810 is the solution to our healthcare crisis.**

Healthcare should not be a nightmare. It should be automatic care – just as it is in every other developed nation.

### **Controlling healthcare costs?**

Our argument is simple: all plans that expand the business of the private insurance industry are doomed to fail because they won't control costs. How can they when their profits, marketing costs and overhead currently waste **30%** of every healthcare dollar in California? The private insurance market has failed to control costs; we have the most free market in insurance in the industrialized world and we pay up to TWICE as much for our healthcare as many other developed countries.

### **Administrative cost limits?**

Previously proposed plans offered to cap the "administrative costs" of the insurance companies at 15%. This is a whopping 13% more than Medicare's publicly financed, non profit system which annually incurs under 2% in administrative cost. Administrative cost for SB 810 is estimated at 5%.

We should NOT sustain an insurance system that cannot control costs or an insurance business whose primary financial incentive to increase profits by denying health care to people.

### **Individual Mandates?**

Experience in Massachusetts, Tennessee, Maine, and several other states has shown that mandated health insurance plans inevitably fail to control health care costs and cover everyone. The reason is that mandated plans build upon existing private insurance without removing the costs and inefficiency of administration, overhead and profits.

Another reason: it's virtually unenforceable. For example, while there is an “individual mandate” to purchase auto insurance in California, 25% of drivers who reside here are uninsured, according to the insurance industry's [Insurance Journal](#).

## **Insurance market reforms?**

So-called “insurance market reforms,” proposed previously by the Governor, would have added new layers of bureaucracy onto the current overly bureaucratic system because all of them feature multiple insurance risk pools.

A 2005 nonpartisan Lewin Group report estimated that we would save billions each year in California with a single payer plan that cuts wasteful private insurance industry out of the equation. America is #1 in cost for healthcare, spending twice the amount per capita as any other nation, but ranking 37th in results according to the Institute of Medicine.

Explore the pages of our [California OneCare campaign website](#) or visit [www.healthcareforall.org](http://www.healthcareforall.org) to learn more about the single payer concept and why it will work – as it already does in virtually every other developed nation.

Please let us know how we can help you.

**California OneCare.org SB 810 Universal “Single Payer” Health Insurance Reform  
Private Care. Public Insurance**

### **CONTACTS:**

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