

# The Vermont Campaign for Health Care Security

## The Voice of 150,000 Vermonters for Health Care Reform

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December 23, 2008

Dear Senator Leahy, Senator Sanders and Congressman Welch

As you no doubt heard directly from voters during the election season, families across Vermont are increasingly anxious about health care and are eager to see the new Administration and Congress keep their pledge to enact reforms that will ensure that every American has access affordable and stable health insurance coverage and high-quality health care.

With rising premiums far out-pacing wages, everyone is feeling the effects. Family premiums for health coverage have increased 30 percent since 2001, while income has increased just three percent. Businesses that offer health insurance see it in their bottom lines, and family budgets are being strained by rising out-of-pocket costs. For the small businesses that can't offer coverage and individuals who do not have coverage, the possibilities of obtaining coverage grow ever dimmer.

The recent downturn in the economy has compounded these problems. Chief among people's economic worries are the health and well being of their families. They fear not being able to take their child to the doctor or get the medications they need to stay healthy and take care of their loved ones.

Fixing the economy and reforming our health care system must be inextricably linked. Polling data collected prior to the election asked likely voters to rank policy ideas based on how effective they would be at improving the current economic situation, and the top two answers were reducing health care costs and providing health care to all Americans.

As we move into a new presidential administration and Congress, our leaders must work together to find common-ground policies to provide coverage to all Americans.

On behalf of our 19 organizations representing over 150,000 Vermonters working together towards comprehensive health care reform, we therefore urge President-elect Obama to make comprehensive health reform the top domestic priority in his administration and the one that he tackles first. Vermont's children, businesses, seniors, people with disabilities and families are counting on action and his leadership.

Sincerely,

Peter Sterling  
Coordinator, Vermont Campaign For Health Care Security

MEMBERS: AARP Vermont Vermont Public Interest Research Group Vermont NEA Vermont Citizens Campaign for Health American Cancer Society National Association of Social Workers National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Vermont Chapter Vermont Psychological Association Community of Vermont Elders ALANA Community Organization Vermont AFL-CIO Vermont Workers Center United Professions of Vermont/American Federation of Teachers Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights Vermont Alliance of Retired Americans Older Women's League Vermont interfaith Action [Alliance@IBM](mailto:Alliance@IBM) Copley United Nurses & Allied Professionals

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