

October 30, 2009

The Honorable Harry Reid
United States Senate
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2803

Dear Majority Leader Reid,

The success of health reform depends on making health coverage and care affordable for the millions of low-wage working families who make up the bulk of the uninsured. The majority of people who will come to rely on subsidized coverage in the Exchange have incomes below 250% of the FPL, about \$46,000 for a family of three. In Nevada, 300,000 people, six out of every ten people in the state who are uninsured, fall within this income range. These families often find themselves struggling to make ends meet, let alone afford thousands of dollars in health costs.

We believe it is vitally important that – as you work to develop the best possible health reform legislation that can pass the Senate – you do everything possible to lower premiums and out-of-pockets costs on low-wage working families who are least able to bear the brunt of an individual mandate. That is why we are alarmed by reports that suggest that your merger proposal may not make significant improvements in affordability for low-wage working families, and may in fact increase premiums on people at lower-income levels.

Our faith, labor, consumer, public health and patient organizations represent millions of American families who actively support health reform, but they need to know that reform will make coverage affordable not place an unsustainable burden on those who today lack coverage. As many interests vie to influence the health reform process, it is important that working families not be left with the short-end of the stick.

We look forward to working closely with you to assure that health reform is truly affordable for America's hard working families.

For more information please contact Gordon Whitman, gwhitman@piconetwork.org.

Sincerely,

American Public Health Association
Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good
Center for Community Change
Center for Rural Affairs
Community Catalyst
Disciples Justice Action Network
The Episcopal Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Faithful America

Families USA
Family Voices
Gamaliel Foundation
Interfaith Worker Justice
Islamic Society of North America
Jesuit Conference
National Council of Churches
National Partnership for Women & Families
National Women's Law Center
NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
PICO National Network
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Washington Office
Raising Women's Voices
SEIU
Sojourners
United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society

Alabama

Alabama Appleseed
Alabama Arise
Baldwin County ACT II-PICO, Fairhope
Birmingham Area Interfaith Sponsoring Committee-PICO

Arkansas

Arkansas Interfaith Alliance

California

Berkley Organizing Congregations for Action-PICO
California Immigrant Policy Center
California Partnership
CHIRLA - Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles
Congregations Building Community-PICO, Modesto
Congregations Organizing for Renewal-PICO, South Alameda County
Contra Costa Interfaith Sponsoring Committee Organization-PICO
Faith in Action-PICO, Bakersfield
Faith in Community-PICO, Fresno
Faith Works-PICO, Northern San Diego County
Greater Long Beach Interfaith Community Organization-PICO
Health Access California
Inland Congregations United for Change-PICO, San Bernardino, Riverside, Coachella
L.A. Voice-PICO, Los Angeles
Oakland Community Organizations-PICO
Orange County Congregations Community Organization-PICO
Peninsula Interfaith Action-PICO
People Acting in Community Together-PICO, San Jose
People and Community Together-PICO, Stockton

PICO California
Sacramento Area Congregations Together-PICO
San Diego Organizing Project-PICO
San Francisco Organizing Project-PICO

Colorado

Colorado All Kids Covered Initiative
Colorado Consumer Health Initiative
Colorado Progressive Action
Colorado Voices for Coverage
Council of Churches – Colorado
Metro Organizations for People-PICO, Denver

Connecticut

United Action Connecticut (UACT)
Connecticut Voices for Children

Florida

Florida CHAIN
Federation of Congregations United to Serve-PICO, Orlando
Affiliated Congregations to Improve our Neighborhoods-PICO, Gainesville
Congregations for Community Action-PICO, Melbourne

Illinois

Campaign for Better Health Care
Organization of the NorthEast, Chicago

Hawaii

Faith Action for Community Equity

Iowa

Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement

Kansas

Sunflower Community Action
Congregations Creating Opportunity-PICO, Kansas City

Kentucky

Kentucky Equal Justice Center
Advocacy Action Network

Louisiana

MICAH Project-PICO, New Orleans
Congregations Organizing People for Equality-PICO, Abbeville
Working Interfaith Network-PICO, Baton Rouge
Faith United Empowering Leadership-PICO, New Roads

Bayou Interfaith Together-PICO, Houma and Thibodaux
PICO Louisiana Interfaith Together

Maine

Consumers for Affordable Health Care
Every Child Matters in Maine
Maine Center for Economic Policy
Maine Children's Alliance
Maine Equal Justice Partners
Maine People's Alliance

Maryland

Lutheran Office on Public Policy in Maryland
Maryland Citizens' Health Initiative
CASA de Maryland, Inc.

Massachusetts

Health Care for All
Alliance to Develop Power, Springfield
PICO Massachusetts Communities Action Network
United Interfaith Action of Southeastern Massachusetts-PICO
Brockton Interfaith Community-PICO
Metropolitan Interfaith Congregations Acting for Hope-PICO, Framingham
Essex County Community Organization-PICO, Lynn

Michigan

Michigan Universal Health Care Access Network
Flint Area Congregations Together-PICO

Minnesota

ISAIAH, Minneapolis
Take Action Minnesota

Mississippi

Mississippi Center for Justice

Missouri

Grass Roots Organizing
Congregations Creating Opportunity-PICO, Kansas City
Missouri Budget Project
Missouri Health Advocacy Alliance
Missouri Health Care for All

Montana

Working For Equality and Economic Liberation (WEEL)

Nebraska

Justice and Advocacy Ministry, ELCA
Interfaith Worker Justice of Nebraska

Nevada

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in Nevada
Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
Family TIES of Nevada

New Hampshire

New Hampshire Voices for Health
NH Citizens Alliance for Action
Every Child Matters in New Hampshire
Granite State Organizing Project, Manchester

New Jersey

New Jersey Citizen Action
Camden Churches Organized for People-PICO
PICO New Jersey

New York

Brooklyn Congregations United-PICO
Center for Independence of the Disabled of New York, New York City
Citizen Action of New York
Commission on the Public's Health System, New York City
Community Service Society of NY, New York City
Empire Justice Center
Hispanic Senior Action Council, New York City
Hon. Michael A. Telesca Center for Justice, Rochester
Interfaith Action-PICO, Rochester
Merger Watch Project, New York City
New Yorkers for Accessible Health Coverage
Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly, Inc., New York City
Queen Congregations United for Action-PICO
The New York Immigration Coalition

North Carolina

North Carolina Fair Share

Ohio

Mahoning Valley Organizing Collaborative, Youngstown
Northeast Ohio Alliance for Hope
Progress Ohio
The AMOS Project, Cincinnati
Toledo Area Jobs with Justice Coalition, Toledo
UHCAN Ohio

Oregon

Oregon Action

Pennsylvania

Community Justice Project, Harrisburg

Congregations United for Neighborhood Action-PICO, Allentown

Consumer Health Coalition, Pittsburgh

Family Practice & Counseling Network, Philadelphia

Health Federation of Philadelphia, Philadelphia

Maternity Care Coalition

Pennsylvania Council of Churches

Pennsylvania Health Access Network

Philadelphia Unemployment Project

Pittsburgh Interfaith Impact Network

Rhode Island

Ocean State Action

The Poverty Institute at Rhode Island College School of Social Work

South Carolina

South Carolina Fair Share

Tennessee

Tennessee Health Care Campaign

Texas

Center for Public Policy Priorities

Utah

Utah Health Policy Project

Vermont

Vermont Interfaith Action-PICO

Voices for Vermont's Children

VPIRG, Montpelier

Virginia

Virginia Organizing Project

Washington

Washington CAN!

Northwest Health Law Advocates

Wisconsin

Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups (CWAG)

Regional

Northeast Action

Northwest Federation of Community Organizations Community Organizations in Action