

✓ Mobilizer

Health Care for the Homeless Action Bulletin

September 16, 2015 | Volume XX, No. 3

Keeping our Eyes on the Prize: Single Payer Health Care



Efforts to keep single payer health care on the table continue! Several bills related to Single Payer, Medicare for All, are currently up for consideration in Congress (details below). A new collaboration, [Health Care is a Human Right](#), launched bringing energy to the movement, and the [2015 Single Payer Strategy Conference](#) is bringing together hundreds of advocates next month. While it's unlikely a single payer bill will pass the current Congress, it's still important to continue to advocate for a dramatically improved health care system. Congress and the public need to know that while Medicaid expansion has improved access to care for millions, broader improvements are still needed to resolve an overly complicated system and ensure that quality health care is accessible to *everyone*.

Single Payer in Congress

These bills currently in Congress propose a Single Payer policy (or bring us closer to one):

H.R. 676: [Expanded & Improved Medicare for All Act](#), introduced by John Conyers Jr. (D-MI13), establishes a Medicare for All Program to provide all individuals residing in the U.S. with health care. The bill restricts participation to public or nonprofit institutions, allowing private insurers to sell benefits not deemed medically necessary and already covered by the bill.

S. 1782 (113th): [American Health Security Act of 2013](#), introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders (D-VT), and **H.R. 1200:** [American Health Security Act of 2015](#), introduced by Jim McDermott (D-WA7), both aim to create a Medicare for All Single Payer system, recognize health care as a human right, and provide flexibility to states. The bill establishes a state-based program that eliminates

✓ Take
action

Support Single Payer!

Ask your [Representative](#) to cosponsor [H.R. 676](#), [H.R. 1200](#), and [H.R. 3241](#). Be on the lookout for the release of an updated bill for [S. 1782](#) and ask your [Senators](#) to cosponsor.

Call the Congressional Switchboard at (877) 210-5351 to speak with your legislator's office.

End the Caps!

Call your [member of congress](#) and tell them "*It's time to pass a budget that works for our communities. Please work with your colleagues to raise the spending caps and fully fund community health, housing and supportive service programs.*"

Call the Congressional Switchboard at (877) 210-5351 to speak with your legislator's office.

federally funded health care programs and prohibits the sale of private health insurance that duplicates benefits provided. S. 1782 (113th) is currently being reworked to account for changes under the ACA and is expected to be reintroduced for the 114th Congress.

H.R. 3241: State Based Universal Health Care Act of 2015, introduced by Representative Jim McDermott (D-WA7), amends the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to authorize State-based universal health care systems. Under the ACA, states can create their own form of health care insurance starting on January 1, 2017, otherwise known as a Section 1332 waiver. The waiver provides an opportunity for states to create alternatives such as a public option, but restrictions in the ACA prohibit states from creating a single payer system. A true single payer system includes everyone, and as Vermont's attempt demonstrated, having a system that allows large employers to maintain their insurance and keeps federal health programs like Medicare in place makes a single payer system difficult to implement. H.R. 3241 would remove these barriers and allow states to access federal health care dollars spent on marketplace subsidy.

Take Action: Support Single Payer by asking your Representative and Senators to cosponsor these bills. Cosponsoring sends a message to other members of Congress that your legislator supports the bill and increases the chance the bill will be moved along in the process of becoming law. Call the Congressional Switchboard at (877) 210-5351 to speak with your legislator's office.

2014 Poverty Data Released

This week the US Census Bureau released 2014 data on income, poverty and health insurance coverage showing 46.7 million people, or 14.8% of the population, living in poverty, relatively unchanged from 2013. Notably, the number of persons without health insurance dropped to 33 million, or 10.3%, down from 13.3% in 2013. This data can be a powerful tool to use when advocating on behalf of your programs. Watch this webinar from our friends at the Coalition on Human Needs to learn how to use this data for advocacy efforts.

Keep Your Voices Raised to End the Spending Caps!



Congress has yet to pass a FY2016 budget and has until September 30 to do so. The options on the table are to pass all 12 Appropriations Bills (not likely to happen), pass a continuing resolution (more likely to happen, though uncertain for how long), or let the government shut down and force a compromise. At some point there will be negotiations on the budget. Your congressional members need to hear from you on the importance of funding for programs that support the HCH community. Call your members of Congress and tell them **"It's time to pass a budget that works for our communities. Please work with your colleagues to raise the spending caps and fully fund community health, housing and supportive service programs."**

For more information see the July and August Mobilizers.

Follow the conversation on twitter @ #capshurt

Submit Your Ideas!

How do we address issues of poverty and housing affordability? Submit your ideas here. Submissions will be accepted up until November 1 2015.

Use Data for Advocacy!

Learn how by watching this webinar entitled Using the New Poverty Data.

On the Horizon

September 22 is National Voter Registration Day. See if an event is happening near you. More information on voter registration efforts at HCH projects will be forthcoming in future Mobilizers.

On September 24, Pope Francis will speak in front of Congress, the first Pope to ever do so. He is expected to bring a message of compassion and social justice. Use this opportunity to highlight the moral obligation to care for the poor by writing op-eds and letters to the editor. More information can be found on the Mercy and Justice site.

Three Interesting Things I've Followed in the Past Week:

A Congressional Briefing on Homelessness in America featuring actor Richard Gere and our partners at HUD, the U.S Interagency Council on Homelessness, and the National Alliance to End Homelessness was held in DC. The briefing aimed to demonstrate the need for more affordable housing and supportive services. View the archived webcast [here](#).

Financial Services Committee Chairman Jeb Hensarling (R-TX) issued a request for new ideas on how best to fight the problems of poverty and housing affordability. I am guessing some of you may have an idea or two. Please submit ideas by following the instructions found [here](#). Submissions will be accepted until November 1, 2015.

A new book titled "[\\$2 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America](#)" shows how more than 1.5 million Americans live on less than \$2 a day, and that this population is growing due in part to the gutting of safety net programs from the 1960s to the mid-1990s. This is an important book showing the need to strengthen safety net programs.

This publication and all HCH advocacy are funded by dues from Organizational Members of the Council. Consider [joining the Council](#) to support this work.

Donate
now

Matt Warfield, MSW, MUP
Health Policy Organizer
National Health Care for the Homeless Council
Baltimore, MD
mwarfield@nhhc.org
(443) 703-1337 | www.nhhc.org



NATIONAL
HEALTH CARE
for the
HOMELESS
COUNCIL

PO Box 60427 | Nashville, TN 37206 US

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

