

**Massachusetts Jobs with Justice
Health Care Action Committee**

May 11, 2009

The Honorable Edward J. Markey

5 High Street, Suite 101
Medford, MA 02155

2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Delivery via FAX

Dear Representative Markey,

In 1964 the election of Lyndon Johnson and a significant change in the composition and culture of Congress led to the passage of Medicare, our country's first universal health plan and a bill that has transformed the experience of aging in America. Change is in the air again, and we write to you from the Jobs with Justice Health Care Action Committee to ask that you support Lyndon Johnson's legacy of humane social policy and fiscal prudence by co-sponsoring national Medicare-for-All legislation, HR676.

Many of us approached you in 2006 about backing HR676. At that time you expressed your support for the goals of the legislation, but you had strong reservations about having a national health plan subjected to an annual appropriations process. We agreed with your concerns -- and thanks to your suggestions and the feedback of many single-payer advocates around the country - - HR676 now contains a Trust funding mechanism similar to Medicare's, as you suggested.

We ask you once again to support publicly-financed, guaranteed health care for all Americans. We realize that the struggle to make comprehensive health care a right, and to make that right affordable for taxpayers, businesses, and households through effective cost control, is a difficult effort in Congress this year. Whatever health reform Congress does consider, we believe needs to be held up in comparison with a single-payer plan as the "gold-standard" for cost-efficient, equitable, and universal care. We need your leadership in supporting and advancing this ideal, and building momentum for truly sustainable, universal health care in this country.

As your constituents, we place the highest priority on your support for HR676. Although a reform law passed in Massachusetts had a broad range of backing organizations, including the health care industry, this is largely because the bill contained no cost controls, only new spending. Everyone from our state's Senate President to the Executive Director of the new Commonwealth Connector have conceded that the law will collapse over time without comprehensive cost controls. Unfortunately, such controls are not currently being considered by the state legislature. Sustainable health reform will involve contentious politics, but the country and our district cannot afford business as usual any longer. With each passing day we are losing access to quality care, while rising costs are squeezing other basic needs out of our household budgets and squeezing basic services out of federal, state, and municipal budgets.

We would appreciate an in-person meeting with you prior to May 22, 2009, when we will be joining a national week of action in support of HR676, including public demonstrations outside the offices of legislators who have not cosponsored the bill.

Thank you for having contributed to making HR676 a better bill, and for your consideration of our request to meet with you again on HR676.

Sincerely,

The Undersigned Constituents of the 7th Congressional District

1. Myles Calvey, Belmont
2. Renner Wunderlich, Belmont
3. Margaret Lazarus, Belmont
4. Anne Wright Arlington
5. Michael Jacoby Brown, Arlington
6. Steve Early, Arlington
7. Suzanne Gordon, Arlington
8. Jan Vrotsos, Medford
9. Linda Harrison, Medford
10. Laura Punnett, Medford
11. Barry Ingber, Medford
12. Cheryl Hirshman, Lincoln
13. Eric Segal, Arlington
14. Susan Donaldson MD, Belmont
15. Julie Felty RNCS, Belmont
16. Naomi Dworkin, MD, Belmont
17. Margaret W. McKenna, MD, Framingham
18. Paul J. Feiss, MD, Winchester
19. Elisabeth Sackton, Lexington
20. Mary Aileen Dame, MD, Medford
21. Cheryl Hamlin, Arlington
22. Gale Maynard, Melrose
23. Gerald C.W. Heng Sr. Esq, Framingham
24. Eileen B Y Heng Sr. CPA, Framingham
25. Patrice M McDonald, Waltham
26. Wayne Altman, MD, Woburn
27. Mary Haskell-Sandler, Lexington
28. Elizabeth Atkins, Belmont
29. Mary S. Burke, Natick
30. Carl Proper, Lexington
31. Shelby and Eva Kashket, Lexington
32. Edward J McDonald Jr, Waltham
33. Mary Raczko, Medford
34. Jill E. Lewis, Arlington
35. Stephen Lewis, Medford
36. Karla N.O'Brien, Belmont
37. Robert O'Brien, Belmont
38. Jeremy Kasparian, Arlington
39. Jim Hall, Arlington
40. Rachel A. Perla, MD, Arlington
41. Mimi Gordon, Medford
42. Richard Nelson Bail,
43. Nancy Doherty, Medford
44. Margaret Reeve Panahi MSN, Framingham
45. John Blanchard, Natick
46. Charles Petty, Lexington
47. Elsie Petty, Lexington
48. Wally Soper, Natick
49. Gretel Munroe, Medford
50. Dave Bjorkman, Malden
51. Helen Moore, Framingham
52. Jenny Reynolds, Natick