

Press Release

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Rep. Markey co-sponsors "Medicare for All" bill

On June 12, Rep. Edward Markey became the seventh member of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation to co-sponsor H.R. 676, the "Medicare for All" approach to health care reform written by Rep. John Conyers.

Rep. Markey joins Massachusetts Representatives Michael Capuano, William Delahunt, Barney Frank, James McGovern, John Olver and John Tierney and 75 other members of Congress as a co-sponsor of H.R. 676.

Rep. Markey has already played an important role helping to write H.R. 676. When he was initially approached about becoming a co-sponsor in 2006, he expressed support for the goals of the legislation, but had strong reservations about having a national health plan subjected to an *annual* appropriations process. Because of his suggestions, H.R. 676 now contains a Trust funding mechanism similar to Medicare's.

Dave Bjorkman, a resident of Malden for more than 20 years, was one of 52 constituents who signed a letter put together by Jobs with Justice's Health Care Action Committee and MassCare on May 11 asking Rep. Markey to become a co-sponsor of H.R. 676. "From my experience working at GE, we know we can't solve the problems in health care through collective bargaining or by just tinkering with incremental reforms," he said. Bjorkman is a machinist at the General Electric Company in Lynn and member of IUE-CWA Local 201.

"By taking more of the cost of health benefits away from employers, Medicare for All would make companies more competitive in the global economy. It would also allow our union to focus on other priorities," added Bjorkman. For many years Local 201 has been helping to spearhead health care reform efforts in Massachusetts. "With Rep. Markey's support for Medicare for All, everyone can see the momentum for comprehensive reform is growing in Massachusetts and across the nation."

Bjorkman was also part of a smaller group of 18 constituents who met with Rep. Markey's District Director Mark Gallagher and Congressional Aide Patrick Lally on May 20. On June 10, along with many other Seventh District constituents, he leafleted the public urging Markey to support HR 676.

Jobs with Justice and MassCare are planning more actions to convince the three remaining Members of Congress from Massachusetts (Reps. Lynch, Neal and Tsongas) to co-sponsor.