

# Everybody In!

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## Surge in Support as HR 676 Reaches 113 Cosponsors

The number of cosponsors of Representative Conyers' Expanded & Improved Medicare for All Act (HR676) has almost doubled in the last three months, as a surge of activists and people fed up and terrified by Republican healthcare cuts have showed up to town hall meetings and flooded their legislators' phone lines and inboxes.

This marks the highest level of support for H.R. 676 since the bill was first introduced in 2003, and the first time that a majority of Democrats in

the House have signed on as cosponsors.

In an April 3 op-ed that Rep. Conyers published in the *Detroit Free Press*, he writes "Time and time again I've heard Democrats dodge questions about their support for universal healthcare by saying they're focused right now on defending the ACA... the time for those excuses has passed."

Conyers concluded with a plea to his colleagues in the House: "[E]lected officials are not supposed to move to the

political center, we are supposed to stake out the moral center and convince others to join us there... I want my colleagues to join me in supporting single-payer not to save money or to win elections, but because it is the moral and just thing to do."

The disastrous American Health Care Act proposed by House Republicans has understandably led to an uprising of opposition across the country. The Campaign for Guaranteed Healthcare, which Healthcare-NOW has helped

to launch and coordinate, has organized a large national coalition of groups who believe that it is not enough to defend the status quo in healthcare, and that the opposition must mount a national movement for improved Medicare for All. Our work has been spectacularly successful so far, as single-payer has emerged as the national alternative to GOP market-based reforms. The Campaign coordinated 60 actions in 30 different states on an April 8 day of action, and we are now turning our focus to the Senate. **HCN!**

## Victory in California: An Interview with Michael Lighty of California Nurses Association and National Nurses United



*Michael Lighty is the Director of Public Policy for National Nurses United, where he has worked since its founding in 2009, and for the California Nurses Association since 1994. Michael has been organizing for social and economic justice for over 35 years, devoted especially to creating a just healthcare system for all.*

**Healthcare-NOW:** Why, personally, has the issue of providing health coverage to all

been so important and urgent for you?

**Michael Lighty:** As a diabetic, I'm very sensitive to healthcare policy since it has a direct impact on me. Healthcare has become an industry that is literally killing people, which is morally reprehensible and economically not sustainable. So I feel tremendous urgency.

**HCN:** What did it take in terms of organizing and coalition building to pass the California

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# National Day of Action for Improved Medicare for All!

On April 8, 2017 the Campaign for Guaranteed Healthcare called for a National Day of Action for Improved Medicare for All! Our coalition groups responded, organizing 60 actions – from rallies to town halls, die-ins, and educational trainings – in 30 different states! See below for images from some of the events organized around the country. **HCN!**



St. Louis, MO



St. Louis, MO



Atlanta, GA



New York, NY



Frederick, MD



Boston, MA



Albuquerque, NM



# Fight Moves to the Senate

By **Ibrahim Sankare**

Healthcare-NOW and our allies are shifting the fight against attacks the GOP's healthcare cuts, and for Improved Medicare for All, to the U.S. Senate.

In May the House hastily and narrowly passed the horrific American Health Care Act (AHCA), which would:

- » allow insurers to drop essential health benefits (including maternity care);
- » give states the option to opt out of coverage for pre-existing conditions which will affect an estimated 27% of Americans under 65 who have pre-existing conditions;
- » impose an "age tax" by allowing insurers to charge older people five times as much as younger people for the same coverage;
- » roll back the ACA's Medicaid expansions, and cap payments to all

states from Medicaid, which result in falling Medicaid payments over time; and

- » provide massive tax cuts to the rich.

Healthcare-NOW and our local allied groups fought against these unconscionable cuts, while also going on the offense for the only moral and sustainable replacement of the ACA — single-payer healthcare.

The result: a record high 113 co-sponsors of HR 676, the Expanded & Improved Medicare for All Act.

After weeks of secrecy, the Senate released a similar healthcare bill in late June, which they have called the "Better Care Reconciliation Act," despite a dismal 17% public approval rating for the companion legislation in the House.

One significant difference from the House bill is that the Senate would start tying Medicaid payments to the rate of general inflation - generally much lower than medical inflation - which would lead to catastrophic reductions in every state's Medicaid budget, on top of eliminating the ACA's Medicaid expansions in the states that opted to expand.

Senate Republicans are walking a very thin line trying to craft legislation that can pass with only a two-vote majority in the Senate, and it is unclear that any bill that can pass the Senate would be able to pass in the House. GOP leadership is desperately trying to push through votes before their members are swarmed by constituents during recesses when Senators return to their districts. Massive opposition to this heartless and dangerous legislation is working, and the future looks promising for single payer and the campaign for healthcare as a human right.

We are taking our strategy of playing offense while playing defense to the Senate next, where Bernie Sanders will be introducing his "Medicare-for-All Act of 2017" shortly. The last time Senator Sanders introduced a single-payer bill in the Senate, not a single legislator in the Senate joined the bill as a co-sponsor. This

**Michael Lighty**... from page 1

single-payer healthcare plan Senate Bill 562?

**ML:** The bill passed the CA Senate after intense grassroots organizing, and it was very good timing that activists in support of SB 562 converged in Sacramento a week before the vote. It also took broadening the historic coalition that supports single-payer, specifically by building on the "Health4All" effort to cover undocumented workers. The primary author of SB 562 is Sen. Ricardo Lara, who also authored that bill. We've also organized a Business Alliance for Healthy California, with the film "Fix It" being especially useful.

**HCN:** The bill now advances to the California State Assembly where it will be amended to include taxes: what are the next steps to ensure that it is successful and gets the required two-thirds votes in both chambers?

**ML:** We've got to win the argument on how single payer contains costs, and how replacing insurance pre-miums, deductibles and co-pays will save money for nearly everyone. Most important, we'll succeed if most people believe Healthy California will guarantee healthcare for all.

What single payer offers is peace of mind for millions of people who are afraid of not getting the healthcare we need. So it's a political question - will Democrats in California let Paul Ryan and Donald Trump determine the healthcare we receive? I don't think so.

The energy among supporters doing canvasses, phone banking, visiting legislators, organizing town halls, all of that organizing is what will get us to 2/3 support in the Assembly. **HCN!**

year we are determined to apply grassroots pressure on Senators in both parties, and to make a leap forward towards majority support in Congress.

Join coalition efforts in your state to tell your Senators: no cuts to healthcare, yes to improved Medicare for All! **HCN!**



Louisville, KY



Montrose, CA

# Healthcare-NOW Launches Grassroots Lobbying Training

Have you emailed and called your Rep about H.R. 676, but continue to be brushed off? Are you working on a state bill and coming up against a difficult legislator?

Take your organizing game to the next level with our NEW Single Payer School training: Grassroots Legislative Advocacy!

We'll go through all the steps needed to run an effective legislative campaign: scoring your legislators, power mapping, and choosing tactics. We also provide examples of petition language, fliers, press releases, and actions that have won real legislative victories.

The training is free to all, with a suggested donation of \$20. Sign up for the training at: <http://bit.ly/grassrootslobbying> **HCN!**



## Take Action for HR676!

**Representative Conyers' bill would create single-payer system, "expanded and improved Medicare for all."**

*Representative John Conyers is the lead sponsor of H.R. 676, the Expanded & Improved Medicare For All Act, which currently has 113 cosponsors. H.R. 676 is the flagship legislation for the single-payer movement, which would establish healthcare as a right for all residents and save billions for families and employers. If you don't see your Representative listed as a cosponsor below, make sure to call the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121 to be connected to your Representative and ask them to cosponsor HR676!*

Rep. Adams, Alma S. [D-NC-12]  
Rep. Barragan, Nanette Diaz [D-CA-44]  
Rep. Bass, Karen [D-CA-37]  
Rep. Beatty, Joyce [D-OH-3]  
Rep. Blumenauer, Earl [D-OR-3]  
Rep. Bonamici, Suzanne [D-OR-1]  
Rep. Boyle, Brendan F. [D-PA-13]  
Rep. Brady, Robert A. [D-PA-1]

Rep. Brown, Anthony G. [D-MD-4]  
Rep. Butterfield, G. K. [D-NC-1]  
Rep. Capuano, Michael E. [D-MA-7]  
Rep. Carson, Andre [D-IN-7]  
Rep. Cartwright, Matt [D-PA-17]  
Rep. Castor, Kathy [D-FL-14]  
Rep. Chu, Judy [D-CA-27]  
Rep. Cicilline, David N. [D-RI-1]  
Rep. Clark, Katherine M. [D-MA-5]  
Rep. Clarke, Yvette D. [D-NY-9]  
Rep. Clay, Wm. Lacy [D-MO-1]  
Rep. Cleaver, Emanuel [D-MO-5]  
Rep. Clyburn, James E. [D-SC-6]  
Rep. Cohen, Steve [D-TN-9]  
Rep. Cooper, Jim [D-TN-5]  
Rep. Correa, J. Luis [D-CA-46]  
Rep. Crowley, Joseph [D-NY-14]  
Rep. Cummings, Elijah E. [D-MD-7]  
Rep. Davis, Danny K. [D-IL-7]  
Rep. DeFazio, Peter A. [D-OR-4]  
Rep. DeGette, Diana [D-CO-1]  
Rep. DeSaulnier, Mark [D-CA-11]  
Rep. Deutch, Theodore E. [D-FL-22]  
Rep. Dingell, Debbie [D-MI-12]  
Rep. Doyle, Michael F. [D-PA-14]  
Rep. Ellison, Keith [D-MN-5]  
Rep. Engel, Eliot L. [D-NY-16]  
Rep. Eshoo, Anna G. [D-CA-18]  
Rep. Espallat, Adriano [D-NY-13]  
Rep. Evans, Dwight [D-PA-2]  
Rep. Fudge, Marcia L. [D-OH-11]  
Rep. Gabbard, Tulsi [D-HI-2]  
Rep. Gallego, Ruben [D-AZ-7]  
Rep. Garamendi, John [D-CA-3]  
Rep. Gonzalez, Vicente [D-TX-15]  
Rep. Green, Al [D-TX-9]  
Rep. Green, Gene [D-TX-29]  
Rep. Grijalva, Raul M. [D-AZ-3]  
Rep. Gutierrez, Luis V. [D-IL-4]

Rep. Hastings, Alcee L. [D-FL-20]  
Rep. Higgins, Brian [D-NY-26]  
Rep. Huffman, Jared [D-CA-2]  
Rep. Jackson Lee, Sheila [D-TX-18]  
Rep. Jayapal, Pramila [D-WA-7]  
Rep. Jeffries, Hakeem S. [D-NY-8]  
Rep. Johnson, Henry C. "Hank," Jr. [D-GA-4]  
Rep. Kaptur, Marcy [D-OH-9]  
Rep. Kelly, Robin L. [D-IL-2]  
Rep. Khanna, Ro [D-CA-17]  
Rep. Lawrence, Brenda L. [D-MI-14]  
Rep. Lawson, Al, Jr. [D-FL-5]  
Rep. Lee, Barbara [D-CA-13]  
Rep. Lewis, John [D-GA-5]  
Rep. Lieu, Ted [D-CA-33]  
Rep. Loebsack, David [D-IA-2]  
Rep. Lofgren, Zoe [D-CA-19]  
Rep. Lowenthal, Alan S. [D-CA-47]  
Rep. Maloney, Carolyn B. [D-NY-12]  
Rep. Matsui, Doris O. [D-CA-6]  
Rep. McGovern, James P. [D-MA-2]  
Rep. McNerney, Jerry [D-CA-9]  
Rep. Meeks, Gregory W. [D-NY-5]  
Rep. Meng, Grace [D-NY-6]  
Rep. Moore, Gwen [D-WI-4]  
Rep. Nadler, Jerrold [D-NY-10]  
Rep. Napolitano, Grace F. [D-CA-32]  
Rep. Nolan, Richard M. [D-MN-8]  
Rep. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]  
Rep. Panetta, Jimmy [D-CA-20]  
Rep. Payne, Donald M., Jr. [D-NJ-10]  
Rep. Perlmutter, Ed [D-CO-7]  
Rep. Pingree, Chellie [D-ME-1]  
Rep. Pocan, Mark [D-WI-2]

Rep. Polis, Jared [D-CO-2]  
Rep. Price, David E. [D-NC-4]  
Rep. Raskin, Jamie [D-MD-8]  
Rep. Roybal-Allard, Lucille [D-CA-40]  
Rep. Rush, Bobby L. [D-IL-1]  
Rep. Ryan, Tim [D-OH-13]  
Rep. Sablan, Gregorio Kilili Camacho [D-MP-At Large]  
Rep. Sanchez, Linda T. [D-CA-38]  
Rep. Sarbanes, John P. [D-MD-3]  
Rep. Schakowsky, Janice D. [D-IL-9]  
Rep. Schiff, Adam B. [D-CA-28]  
Rep. Scott, Robert C. "Bobby" [D-VA-3]  
Rep. Serrano, Jose E. [D-NY-15]  
Rep. Sires, Albio [D-NJ-8]  
Rep. Slaughter, Louise McIntosh [D-NY-25]  
Rep. Smith, Adam [D-WA-9]  
Rep. Soto, Darren [D-FL-9]  
Rep. Speier, Jackie [D-CA-14]  
Rep. Swalwell, Eric [D-CA-15]  
Rep. Takano, Mark [D-CA-41]  
Rep. Thompson, Bennie G. [D-MS-2]  
Rep. Thompson, Mike [D-CA-5]  
Rep. Titus, Dina [D-NV-1]  
Rep. Tonko, Paul [D-NY-20]  
Rep. Veasey, Marc A. [D-TX-33]  
Rep. Velazquez, Nydia M. [D-NY-7]  
Rep. Visclosky, Peter J. [D-IN-1]  
Rep. Waters, Maxine [D-CA-43]  
Rep. Watson Coleman, Bonnie [D-NJ-12]  
Rep. Welch, Peter [D-VT-At Large]  
Rep. Wilson, Frederica S. [D-FL-24]  
Rep. Yarmuth, John A. [D-KY-3]