

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE FOR GUARANTEED HEALTH CARE

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the House of Representatives and Health Staff

FROM: The Leadership Conference for Guaranteed Health Care: The National Single Payer Alliance (Conveners: Physicians for a National Health Program, Progressive Democrats of America, Healthcare NOW!, and the California Nurses Association/NNOC).

RE: Forum: "National Lessons from State Health Reform: The Massachusetts Case Study"
February 25, 2009, 2pm – 4pm, 2226 Rayburn House Office Building

We encourage you and your staff to attend an important Congressional joint forum organized by the Leadership Conference for Guaranteed Health Care. In the last two decades over a dozen state health reform acts have attempted to provide universal health care coverage. Critical analysis of these models is highly significant to the national reform debate. The February 25 forum will consider the most recent state health care overhaul this country has seen. What can we learn from Massachusetts and is it a model for national health policy?

The forum, "National Lessons from State Health Reform: The Massachusetts Case Study", will be held on **February 25, 2009, 2pm – 4pm, 2226 Rayburn House Office Building.** Witnesses will represent health centers, insurance brokers, physicians, nurses and patients. They will include:

- David Himmelstein, MD, Cambridge Hospital Physician, Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School
- Sandy Eaton, RN, Massachusetts Nurses Association
- Jamie Eldridge, Massachusetts State Senator
- Mary Ford, former Mayor of Northampton and Human Services Manager
- Robert Gaw, President, National Association of Socially Responsible Organizations, Health Benefits Administrator
- Arthur MacEwan, PhD, Professor of Economics, University of Massachusetts Boston

The witness panel will address several questions highly relevant to the debate over national health reform:

- Has the Massachusetts reform achieved universal coverage?
- Has increasing coverage improved access to care for Massachusetts's patients?
- Has the state's insurance exchange been able to control premium costs?
- What has the reform cost the state and business?
- Is the reform sustainable?

All Members of Congress are invited to participate in the forum by listening to witness testimony and asking questions of the panel. The fact-finding forum will benefit national legislation assessment.

The Leadership Conference for Guaranteed Health Care is a coalition of doctors, nurses and other health care providers; labor unions; nonprofit agencies; reform advocates and faith-based organizations working to achieve guaranteed comprehensive, high quality, and affordable health care coverage for everyone. The coalition specifically advocates for a publicly funded and privately delivered national health care system structured around a single-payer financing mechanism.

This briefing is intended for Members and staff and is open to the public. RSVP is appreciated, Jessica Yarbrough, jyarbrough@calnurses.org, (202) 974-8300.