

## What Can You Do?

**1. Become Informed!** Attend rallies, house parties, campaign events. Ask candidates to explain their plans for health care reform.

**2. Add your voice.** Tell candidates:

- Health care is a right.
- Health care dollars should go for actual care, not for insurance company profits.
- All Americans should be covered by a single payer system that eliminates the costs of lobbying, wasteful paperwork, advertising, profits, and denial of claims.
- Government should be able to negotiate bulk drug prices.

**3. Urge your legislators** to support HR 676, a universal single payer bill.

The toll-free congressional switchboard (866) 338-1015 will connect you to your legislators.

**4. Volunteer** to help candidates of your choice.

**5. Join organizations.** More information at:

**League of Women Voters of Amherst, MA Health Care Committee**

[lwvahealthcare@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvahealthcare@yahoo.com)

**Mass-Care** (617) 723-7001  
[www.masscare.org](http://www.masscare.org)

**Healthcare-NOW** (800) 453-1305  
[www.healthcare-now.org](http://www.healthcare-now.org)

2/2008 League of Women Voters  
of Amherst, MA, Health Care Committee.

## Legislation Pending

### United States:

- **HR 676: United States Health Insurance Act**
  - Single payer national health care plan
  - Universal - covers everyone
  - Comprehensive, quality care
  - Affordable - less than we pay now
  - Not tied to employment
  - Choice of physicians and facilities
  - Eliminates complex, costly paperwork
- **S 1218: Medicare for All Act**
  - Universal coverage through Medicare or the Federal Employee Health Program
  - Comprehensive, quality care
  - Provides preventive care
- **HR 4: Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act**
  - Would negotiate lower drug prices for Medicare beneficiaries
- **S 95: Kids First Act**
  - Would cover the 11 million uninsured children in the U.S.

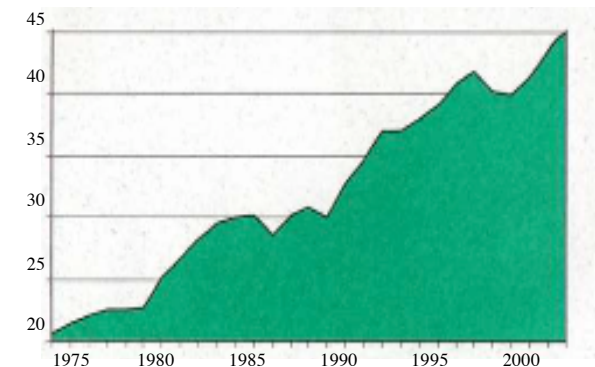
### Massachusetts:

- **S 703/H 1137: MA Health Care Trust**
  - A single payer, comprehensive, quality plan for all state residents
- **S 411: MA Prescription Drug Fair Pricing Program**
  - Would reduce cost of Rx drugs in MA

# The Health Care Crisis In America

## Problems & Solutions

Number of Uninsured Americans (millions)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

*"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane."*

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

## What is the Crisis in U.S. Health Care?

- 47 Million Americans are without health insurance; millions more have inadequate coverage.
- Health insurance premiums have soared 87% in the last 5 years, stressing the budgets of individuals, cities, towns, states, and the nation.
- Businesses are forced to either lay off workers or cut health care benefits.
- Insurance companies deny coverage to people with pre-existing conditions.
- Insurance companies make excessive profits by denying client claims.
- Excessive administrative costs and exorbitant profits consume one third of your health care dollar.
- One child in nine in the U.S. is uninsured. This fact contributes to our ranking 20<sup>th</sup> out of 21 wealthy countries in child welfare. (UNICEF 2007)
- Medical costs lead to almost half of all bankruptcies; three quarters of those people had health insurance at the start of their illness.
- Disabled soldiers who return with lifelong medical needs are grossly neglected.

## How to Reform The Health Care System

**Adopt a publicly financed, not-for-profit, single payer system that ensures high quality comprehensive health care for everyone. It would:**

- Institute simplified, single-form billing to reduce administrative costs.
- Eliminate the wasteful expense of advertising, lobbying, and excessive profits in the health care system. Non-medical costs would fall from the current 30-50% to less than 5% (as in Medicare).
- Use the \$300 billion per year saved (by above) to provide health care for the 47 million who are now uninsured.
- Computerize patient records for safer medical care.
- Negotiate fair pricing of drugs through bulk discounts.
- Guarantee preventive care.
- Provide public health planning to protect and improve community health through research, education and emergency response preparedness.

**Is it OK for illness to bankrupt families?**

**\*\*\***

**Is it OK for families to go hungry in order to pay for health care?**

**\*\*\***

**Is it OK to lose your health care coverage when you lose your job?**

**\*\*\***

**Is it OK for disabled soldiers to have no health insurance?**

**\*\*\***

**Is it OK for insurance companies to deny proven medical treatment to cancer patients?**

**\*\*\***

**Is it OK for more babies to die in the first year of life in the U.S. than in other developed countries?**

**\*\*\***

**Why is it that the U. S. ranks 37<sup>th</sup> in overall health care outcomes, yet spends twice as much per capita as higher ranked countries? (WHO 2007)**