

**Coalition of Labor Union Women  
16th Biennial Convention  
Orlando, Florida  
September 7 - 10, 2011**

**WE NEED SINGLE PAYER WITH MEDICARE FOR ALL**

The Coalition of Labor Union Women has been on record in support of HR 676, Congressman John Conyers' single payer health care legislation, Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act<sup>3</sup>, since the CLUW Convention of October of 2003.

Workers, their families and their unions are still waging an increasingly difficult struggle to win or to keep good health care coverage. Almost every union at every contract deadline must battle and sacrifice merely to sustain health care benefits. The rising costs of health insurance are blocking workers' progress in wages and other areas.

More employers are forcing high deductible plans onto workers, resulting, according to Dr. Steffie Woolhandler, in a \$1,000 annual pay cut for women due to the higher average health expenditures of women.<sup>7</sup> All of our unions and our nation face a healthcare crisis.

About 50 million people in the U. S. are currently without health insurance and the high cost of premiums, deductibles, and co-pays force even the insured to go without needed care. Despite the advances of the civil rights era, African Americans suffer an annual 83,000 deaths in excess of what would be expected were there equality.<sup>2</sup> Unorganized workers have either no or inadequate coverage.

Every year more than 45,000 in the U. S. die unnecessarily simply because they had no health insurance.

While we in the United States spend approximately twice as much of our gross domestic product as other developed nations on health care, we remain the only industrialized country without universal coverage. Our problem worsens each year as insurance costs increase and as gradual solutions have failed to make a dent in the problem.

The U. S. health system continues to treat health care as a commodity distributed according to the ability to pay, rather than as a social service to be distributed according to human need. Insurance companies and HMOs compete not by increasing quality or lowering costs, but by avoiding covering those whose needs are greatest.

Economic necessity and moral conscience compel us to seek a better way.

Congressman John Conyers, Jr. (D-MI) (Joined by 65 co-sponsors in the 112th Congress) has introduced HR 676, Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act. This single-payer health care program proposes an effective mechanism for controlling skyrocketing health costs while covering all 50 million uninsured Americans. The bill also restores free choice of physicians to patients and provides comprehensive prescription drug coverage to all.

HR 676 would cover every person in the U. S. for all necessary medical care including prescription drugs, hospital, surgical, outpatient services, primary and preventive care, emergency services, dental including periodontics & oral surgery, mental health, home health, physical therapy, rehabilitation (including for substance abuse), vision care, durable medical equipment, hearing services including hearing aids, chiropractic and long term care. HR 676 ends deductibles and co-payments. HR 676 would save billions annually by eliminating the high overhead and profits of the private health insurance industry and HMOs. The transition to national health insurance would apply the savings from administration and profits to expanded and improved coverage for all. HR 676 will also save Medicare from those who seek to cut its benefits or destroy it entirely.

A single payer program as provided by HR 676 is the only affordable option for universal, comprehensive coverage.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:**

CLUW will wholeheartedly renew its endorsement of HR 676, Expanded and Improved Medicare for All.

CLUW will work with other unions and community groups to build a groundswell of popular support and action for single payer universal health care and HR 676 until we make what is morally right for our nation into what is also politically possible.

CLUW will send a copy of this resolution to Congressman Conyers, to all members of the U.S. House and Senate, to the AFL-CIO Executive Council, and to the news media.

CLUW will take other actions to mobilize our members, our unions, and our communities at the grassroots to encourage other members of the House to sign on as co-sponsors of HR 676.

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1. <http://www.pnhp.org/news/2007/april/high-deductable-plans-penalize-women-middle-aged-adults-sick-children>
  2. <http://content.healthaffairs.org/content/24/2/459.abstract>
  3. <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/gpoxmlc112/h676 ih.xml>