



Insurance profits make us **SICK!**

an Iowa Campaign for Healthcare for All!

**Join our weekly vigils
Tuesdays, 11:30am-12:30pm
Locust Street and 6th Avenue
Downtown, Des Moines, Iowa**

"A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Insurance profits not only make us sick; they often kill us.

Enough is enough. At least 20,000 die each year. Millions suffer needlessly. We can't take it any more! A coalition of Iowa peace groups has launched a Des Moines-based Healthcare Campaign. The campaign focuses on the abuses of health insurance corporations and includes a weekly vigil in front of Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield headquarters in Des Moines.

Why Dismantle Health Care Insurance Companies?

The healthcare crisis is driven by their profiteering and greed and is by far the greatest reason for it. In fact, healthcare for all Americans will never be accomplished until these companies are dismantled. So-called "public option" programs are not a step toward more care, but more of the same because the strangle-hold insurance companies have over who lives and dies will still be in place. Most Americans want a single-payer, national healthcare plan. The "public option" is just evidence of the power that health insurance lobbyists wield over elected officials. Plus, these elected officials have millions in personal portfolios invested in these companies.

Why Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield headquarters?

The Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield Insurance Corporation, is the largest health insurance seller in Iowa. Its headquarters is based in Des Moines.

Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield is the Iowa icon of everything that's wrong with the health insurance industry in the United States. The Blue Cross/Blue

Shield name is linked to several scams and scandals in recent years; and their arbitrary denial of payment routinely cost Iowa lives. Originally non-profit, the company became a for-profit mutual in the mid-1990s, eliminating the public's ability to fully know how they spend the premiums they collect.

We do know the salary of their CEO, John Forsyth is in the millions and has doubled in the past few years, that they spend millions on marketing and capital ventures to increase their income which often goes to their other for-profit subsidiaries.

Estimates are that as much as 40% out of every dollar they take in from customer premiums goes to things other than healthcare, 20 million-plus offered or given to the University of Iowa for a naming opportunity and entrepreneurial programs, a PAC that gives about \$200,000 a year to candidates, and 200 million for a luxury building in downtown Des Moines, scheduled to be completed next year. Perks and salaries for Wellmark CEOs are outrageous. While providing increasingly wealthy lifestyles for its officers, Wellmark continues to increase premiums while cutting services for its customers, even at the expense of human life. What is Wellmark doing with all this extra income, because it's not going to patient care.

We are actively seeking individuals and organizations to sign on and lend a hand. The easiest way to participate right now is to join our weekly Monday vigils between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Healthcare is a national crisis.

- 50 million Americans have no insurance or access to medical care and, with the economic crisis, this number is skyrocketing.

- 20,000 (probably more) die each year due to lack of health care.

- Millions suffer disability and chronic conditions that would have been prevented by access to adequate health care.

■ Millions who have health insurance are denied necessary care by their insurers.

■ Health care bills (of people who HAVE health insurance) are the single highest reason for filing bankruptcy in the U.S.

■ Untreated disease and injuries hurt those who do have access to healthcare and make us more vulnerable to pandemics.



Health Insurance Corporations contribute to the economic crisis and perpetuate war.

The health insurance industry is a powerful player in the corporate greed and gambling game that has led to America's economic collapse. Insurance companies collude with profiteers in investment schemes, secret deals and other shady wealth-building capital ventures.

Insurance companies realize a huge share of their profits from war manufacturers and contractors and others that promote military spending for corporate profits.

Americans pay for National health care, but don't get it.

Americans pay more per capita for health by far than any nation that has national health care for all. Most first-world, industrialized nations already have national health care, and they pay far less for health care than we do. France, Italy, Canada, and Great Britain are among them. Except for a few elective procedures, they wait less time than we do for medical treatment.

The health insurance industry cares about profits not about us.

Coverage by health insurers is based on profitability not on providing health care for those who need it. The industry makes its profits by only insuring those their research predicts will remain healthy and by increasingly denying coverage to those who do or might get sick.

■ 20-40% of every health care dollar goes to profits and overhead and things other than anyone's healthcare.

■ Precious health care dollars are wasted on symbols of wealth like private jets to skyscrapers to capital investments.

The health insurance industry lies to us.

Lobbyists with outrageous salaries are paid to lie to you about national health care to keep protect their own interests. The truth is:

■ Nations with national healthcare are as efficient as ours.

■ National healthcare will ultimately create more jobs . They just won't be in the health insurance industry.

■ No one will have less ability to choose a doctor or wait significantly longer for medical procedures with a single-payer healthcare plan.

■ Mainstream media and members of congress are financially controlled by insurance lobbyists, campaign contributions, and advertising revenue.

We CAN do something about it.

Every American should get the same health care regardless of their ability to pay for it. If we can provide the same highways and same fire department for all, we can provide the same health care for all.

Single-payer healthcare is the viable way out of the crisis.

Single-payer healthcare (H.R. 676) cuts out the middle man (i.e. the health insurance industry) and earmarks all healthcare dollars in one public fund to be used for healthcare only. Experts (and even Presidents Clinton and Obama) have agreed it's our best option, but claim the public doesn't have the political will to make it happen. Let's prove them wrong and demand equal health care for all.

Join us!

The "Insurance Profits Make Us Sick" campaign will encompass a wide range of strategies and tactics including weekly vigils, educational programs, speakers, movies, public prayer services, legislative advocacy for single-payer health insurance, direct actions, demonstrations, and nonviolent civil disobedience.

National Links about HR676

Healthcare NOW!
www.healthcare-now.org/

Physicians for a National Health Plan
www.pnhp.org

Progressive Democrats of America
<http://pdamerica.org/>

Health Justice, 1payer.net
www.1payer.net/

For more information and/or to join this campaign, go to:

www.desmoinescatholicworker.org

www.insuranceprofitsmakeussick.org

www.iowansforhealthcareforall.org

or phone: 515-282-4781