

# Support the 'Health Care for All Illinois' Act! (HB 311)

Dear Members of the General Assembly,

We write as physicians, nurses and citizens of Illinois to encourage you to abandon piecemeal reform of our state's broken health system and instead support a comprehensive solution: a universal single-payer statewide health insurance system for all Illinoisans, as embodied in the Health Care for All Illinois Act (HB 311).

Our state's health system is in crisis. More than 1.8 million Illinoisans lack health insurance coverage, and the ranks of uninsured swell with each year. Skyrocketing costs have resulted in additional millions of under-insured: those with policies so skimpy that they afford neither access to care when needed nor protection from financial ruin in the event of illness. Indeed, of the 40,000 Illinoisans bankrupted by medical bills each year, three-quarters had insurance when they got sick.

In contrast to the futile palliatives commonly offered for reform, a single-payer system ("Medicare for All") could provide comprehensive benefits to all Illinoisans while creating a stable long-term mechanism for financing health care. Illinois residents already pay the highest health care taxes in the world. A single-payer system could recapture more than \$13 billion in unnecessary administrative costs by streamlining paperwork. Combined with what we're already spending, that's enough to provide comprehensive coverage for all.

We recognize that a single payer reform threatens the multi-billion dollar insurance industry, and would force down the high profits enjoyed by drug companies. But such interests must not be placed ahead of the health of the people of Illinois. Only a single payer system can assure universal and comprehensive coverage at an affordable price. The people deserve no less.

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