

# OUTREACH GUIDE

## EMPOWERING SINGLE-PAYER ACTIVISTS TO BE ORGANIZERS

Presented by Single Payer Now and Healthcare Now!

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### **Feedback**

We want your feedback on this guide. Questions, comments, and suggestions are welcome and encouraged! Contact Lisa Patrick-Mudd ([lisa@singlepayernow.net](mailto:lisa@singlepayernow.net)).

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# INTRODUCTION

## Single payer healthcare is a movement of the greatest people in the world.

Every time I meet a new activist, or I'm out working with volunteers, it never ceases to amaze me the generosity, spirit, and compassion that our folks have. Having the opportunity to be involved with these amazing individuals is truly humbling.

We have been charged with the enormous task of educating the public about this vital issue. Currently, we lack the financial resources to win a media campaign and we need to focus our efforts at the grassroots and build our database of supporters to make our dream a reality one step at a time.

This Outreach Guide was designed to empower you— the dedicated activist — to become more involved in community outreach and education. The following components are fundamental in building our movement: community outreach, neighborhood meetings, fundraising events, and speakers trainings. This guide provides relevant tools to go out and gain support, while training more activists to do the same. Think of it as a chain reaction ... and it starts with you!

Our hope is that you will read this guide and see that YOU have the power to change the world. We can do this, together!

Envision how our country will look when every human being has the undeniable right to healthcare. Then, envision yourself making the changes that will put us on the path towards achieving national single payer healthcare.

I would like to thank Don Bechler, Katie Robbins, and Aaron Proctor for their contributions and guidance in creating this guide. Their collective wisdom and years of experience are an inspiration, and I am so grateful to have them as my teachers and friends.

Finally, this guide is very much a work in progress. We would greatly appreciate your feedback and any suggestions to improve it.

- Lisa Patrick-Mudd  
Single Payer Now



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH

## Why It's Important

One of the most effective ways to talk to people about single payer on the street is by tabling, which means either setting up a small table in a public space or simply using a clipboard to ask people to sign postcards of support for H.R. 676 (or Single Payer or Medicare for All). Tabling offers opportunities for taking action and one-on-one conversation. Growing our database of supporters means growing our movement.

### Listening is Crucial

While tabling, you have the opportunity to educate people with facts about single payer, but you also have a chance to listen. Hear their fears and concerns, then address them accordingly. Everyone you meet has a different opinion about the U.S. healthcare system. Once you know his/her position, you can decide how to best pursue a conversation. Are they most concerned about cost? Or that single payer is a government run program? (See the appendix for talking points.)

### Opening (and Closing) Doors For Conversation

Once you know where he/she stands, educate them about H.R. 676 and how single payer would be a social, moral, and fiscal step forward for our country. Tabling presents a golden opportunity for someone you may have never met otherwise to become involved with this movement.

As you know, there will always be people who don't agree with you. However, that doesn't mean you have to stand there and be a punching bag or subjected to personal attacks. End those conversations immediately. They will go nowhere, and leave you frustrated and emotionally depleted. Say something like "Thank you for your time, I guess we'll just have to agree to disagree, have a nice day" and walk away.

One-on-one conversations are the backbone of any grassroots movement. Personal interactions are key for winning single payer in this country.

### Why We Use Postcards

The postcard is perhaps one of the most important tools we have for opening up a conversation with someone. It also serves two purposes: 1) instant activism because we send them to legislators to keep single payer on their radar and 2) growing our database.

Once we have this person's information, we identify which assembly or senate district he or she lives in, invite them to meetings or speakers trainings, and ask them to become a financial contributor.

Order cards at [healthcare-now.org](http://healthcare-now.org)

## Scouting Locations

### Farmer's Markets

Busy hubs of community life, markets are great places to find supporters. Generally people are more conscientious and moving at a slower pace, so it's easier to approach them and talk.



### Foot Traffic

Active street corners near public transit stops, shopping centers, and town squares are good. We set up shop near an anti-war demonstration once, which was also next to a subway station. Hundreds of postcards were filled out by single payer supporters.

### Timely Events

Follow your personal interests. Look over the weekly paper and consider what events are going on in your community that will draw large crowds: music festivals, seasonal street fairs, downtown art walks, and pride or cultural parades.

### Clear signage

This is helpful to let people know what you are doing. Keep it simple!



## Nuts & Bolts

### Do Your Homework

Now that you've got an ideal location or two, try to find out who is in charge of the event in advance. Let him/her know what you'd like to do. People will appreciate this. It is important to build positive community relationships with the event hosts.

Unless you have permission from the operator or manager of the market, you should not just set up your table. If you've been unsuccessful in reaching someone ahead of time, try to find the person in charge on the same day, and let them know what you would like to do. Still no sign of authority? See if there is a designated "free speech" area. If not, we've found it's usually okay to have clipboards and circulate outside near the entrances.

### Big Rallies or Demonstrations

As long as you do not obstruct street or sidewalk traffic, we've found it's usually fine to set up a small table or use clipboards and circulate through the crowds. You may want to have more volunteers for these types of events and set up a basecamp since it's more crowded.



# COMMUNITY OUTREACH PART 2

## Tools

- Clipboards and pens
- Postcards
- Rubber bands (to keep signed cards separate from unsigned)
- Buttons and hats that say “single payer” or “Medicare for all”
- Fact sheets on H.R. 676
- Portable table
- Leaflets for your next meeting
- Water and sunscreen
- A friend or two!
- Camera to document the effort



### Do I need a permit if I'm on a public sidewalk?

We have always operated under the auspice of “do now, ask later” when it comes to setting up a table. We have yet to have a problem. If you like, you can call your city hall. Ask to speak to someone about it. Otherwise, be aware that someone (e.g. law enforcement) may ask you to leave.

### Practical Tip

We usually go out in teams of 2-4 people. Standing on your feet and being “on-the-ball” for up to three hours at a time is plenty. Listen to your body; if you get tired, stop! Some days will be better than others, so try not to get discouraged. Regardless how many people say yes or no, you are raising awareness, which counts for a lot. Remember, every card signed is one more supporter than you had before you started. This is a marathon, not a sprint.

### How Often

Once a month is good to start. When you start getting more volunteers, add as many days and venues as your group wants. We try to go out at least twice a month.

### Privacy

We never sell or loan our database lists to anyone, ever. It is for our use only. Encourage people to fill out as much information as they are comfortable providing.

### Have Fun!

You're part of a movement. You're educating the public to bring a change that affects everyone positively. Bring a friend. Make an afternoon of it and get a bite to eat together afterward.

Remember, interacting with people is invigorating. After a few hours of talking to folks, you will feel energized to know that there are a lot more support out there than you might have thought!

## Example Lines

- “Would you like to send our postcard to Congress to support Medicare for all?”
- “Could you sign our postcard to support universal health care?”
- “Do you support health care for all minus the insurance companies?”

If you don't feel that you are able to answer a person's tough questions on the street, you could say:

- “Why don't you come to our meeting, and the speaker will answer your questions?”
- “I'll find out for you and get back to you by e-mail or phone.” Refer them to the following websites:  
[healthcare-now.org](http://healthcare-now.org)  
[singlepayernow.net](http://singlepayernow.net)  
[pnhp.org](http://pnhp.org)

This takes some pressure off of you feeling put on the spot, and shows your commitment towards single payer.





# MEETINGS

## Why It's Important

Meetings are a vital component to solidify our base once community outreach finds new support. They present opportunities for new people to become more involved with single payer organizing and its success.

Meetings also allow you to invite people to a follow-up activity while you're tabling in the community.

### We Are Organizers

Our goal is to build our movement so that politicians have no choice but to put single payer front and center in the national discussion on healthcare.

Growing our databases is essential to achieving this kind of power.

### How Often

Hold meetings every 2-3 months. Not only does this give your members the opportunity to stay current on single payer politics, but also it instills a sense of community and camaraderie amongst activists. We're all in this together. It's nice to stay connected with peers, passionate about the same work.

Our vision for justice and equality in health care is the common thread that binds us together, no matter who we are, what we do for a living, or where we come from.

## Scouting Locations

### Central, or the Next Best Thing

- In areas large or small with a lower support base, stick to the side of town where you know most of the activists live. Less travel time usually equals greater attendance.
- Ask friends and co-workers. Is anyone active with a group? If so, where do they meet?

### After Picking the Neighborhood, Places to Consider

- Local churches, hospitals, union halls, or community centers often have rooms that are available for free or low cost hourly use. Small community rooms usually rent for \$25/hour.
- Private residences are great. Maybe someone you know has a large living room that he/she is willing to open up for a few hours? Offer to set up and clean up. Bring snacks, coffee, etc.
- Coffee shop or café are good because there's no set up or clean up. They make for a nice first meeting. You can get the group's consensus on where to meet from there on, or it could be a regular thing, i.e. "Second Saturday of the Month at Riverside Cafe."



Our goal is to educate and organize as many people as possible. We want to double our database every year.

## Get The Word Out

- Call and e-mail all of the people in your database.
- Make a leaflet that includes eye-catching details like "Single Payer," the event date, location, and guest speakers. (See appendix for an example.)
- Post it around the neighborhood where the meeting is located. Leave leaflets at your local community center, senior center, union hall or church, as well as wherever your meeting will be held.
- Post it in local businesses, i.e. coffee shops and markets; wherever you work, leave a leaflet in the break room.
- Contact your local newspapers and weekly publications. See if they have an "events calendar" and ask to get listed.
- Call your local radio station; they often read local announcements on the air. Some also post community events on their website.
- If you participate with another group, ask if you can make an announcement at that meeting, and let people know about your next single payer event.
- Use word of mouth! Ask people to tell their friends and co-workers. Share it on Facebook. (See more tips below.)

### Ask For Help

One person doing all the work alone = burnout. When spreading the word, don't hesitate to ask people to help you! People like to be asked, and there are always tasks large or small for the taking. (See appendix for sample letter and e-mail to individuals on your database.)

### Give Advanced Notice

Start publicizing 3-4 weeks prior to the event. Once you send the initial notices out, follow up the week of and again a day ahead with a reminder. People are busy and can forget things, even important meetings about single payer healthcare!

### Using Facebook

- Create a Facebook Page so people can "like" your group and receive your updates on their Wall. You can also use a Facebook Group, which behave a little differently: they are moreso for internal use rather than external promotion.
- Create events on the page. It's helpful to see RSVPs.
- Ask people to share and "like" pages on your group's website.

# MEETINGS

PART 2

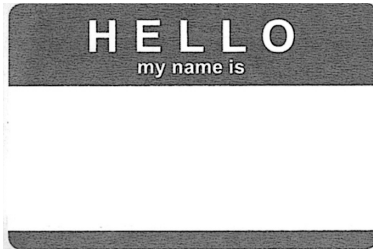
## What To Talk About

### Before the Meeting

- It is a very good idea to have things lined up for people to sign up for, such as tabling at a local farmer's market, helping with a mailing, or being part of a phone tree.
- Create clear signage to display between parking lots, halls, and doors to your meeting space. Add arrows.
- Designate a person to ask for donations. Generally, a different person than whomever is chairing the meeting. If there is no other person, the facilitator can wear that hat as well!
- Set up two tables. One table should include: sign in sheets (name, address, phone, e-mail) and nametags.

MEET  
HERE

On a separate table, include literature: postcards to take, H.R. 676 fact sheets, and sign up sheets for other outreach opportunities and upcoming events.



### During the Meeting, Start with Single Payer 101

- Maybe show "Sicko," or the Graham Walker Cartoon, or a "Mad As Hell Doctors" DVD. There are quite a few options for videos out there. Check out the Healthcare Now!, Single Payer Now, and Physicians for a National health Program websites for resources.
- You might follow that with a general discussion of HR 676 & update folks on local & national efforts related to single payer.
- Bring in a guest speaker, such as a physician from PNHP, a nurse organizer, a religious member from the community, or a labor leader to talk will keep the meeting varied and the topics timely.

## Sample Agenda

1. **Call meeting to order.** Let people know they have 30 seconds to introduce him/herself; i.e., why they came, organization or union affiliation, how they found out about the meeting, present an agenda. (You can write one up on a poster board ahead of time.) This gives people an idea what you will cover and the timeline.
2. **First speaker or presentation.** Save all Q&A until after the presentations. However, some speakers may prefer to answer immediately after his/her time; ask him or her in advance to determine the best way to address it.
3. **Q & A** about the presentation
4. **"Pass the hat."** While that's going on, announce upcoming outreach opportunities. Circulate another clipboard so people can sign up for them. Remind people to take postcards before they leave, and bring them back signed at the next meeting.
5. **General discussion** about the presentation and/or upcoming events
6. **Meeting adjourned, wrap up, etc.** Let everyone know the next meeting or event date.



### Just for Fun

When you start having larger meetings, consider a raffle. Ask a local store for a donation of a bookmark or a gift certificate to a coffee shop, or a nice jar of homemade preserves work well! A raffle is something small, but it is fun and interactive. Besides, who doesn't like to win something? We usually spend around \$5 on a prize.



### Don't Forget!

- After the meeting, announce upcoming events and send around a clipboard so people can sign up. Designate a person to remind volunteers of their commitments.
- Ask everyone to take 5+ postcards. Challenge people to have them signed and brought back by the next meeting.
- Send around the hat. Don't be embarrassed to ask for donations. With this money, your group can buy supplies, like clipboards or pens, pay for larger meeting spaces and refreshments, request educational materials, etc.

# MEETINGS PART 3

## Chairing a Meeting

- Your number one priority is to keep things running according to the agenda. This allows the group to cover all of the important items of the day, plus each person who wants to speak an opportunity.
- Running a “stack” is helpful; take names of everyone with his/her hand up, and then call them in order. Let people know they have 2 minutes to speak, then you will move on. After everyone has had the chance, time permitting, they can have another turn.
- As the facilitator, even if the person you have called on is saying something you don’t agree with, or not making a whole lot of sense, let them talk. Try hard to refrain from looking annoyed or upset. This can be difficult, as sometimes emotions run high in these types of situations, but it will show compassion and respect, and you will be glad you kept your cool once the meeting is adjourned.
- If you are new to this, don’t stress out over everything! Chairing a meeting is not easy, it takes practice and trial and error. Take it as you go. Each group will have it’s own dynamic, what’s right for some might not be right for others. Feel free to pick and choose at will.



### **We're Here For You**

Let us know how you are doing and what types of activities you're up to. We are here to offer assistance if and when you need it.



# FUNDRAISING & EVENTS

## Why It's Important

Fundraisers can help to raise the visibility of your organization, engage new supporters, educate people on single-payer health care, and bring in funds to continue the work.

### Do Fundraisers and Events Regularly

Some groups choose to hold them monthly, others semi-annually. The frequency depends on your local capacity to organize them. Not everyone on your mailing list wants to attend a meeting, but many want to support the work by attending fundraisers. Such events also provide an opportunity to tell the local media about your organization. Submit a simple press release weeks in advance. Take pictures (or provide existing pictures) to accompany any press listings. In addition to raising public awareness, educating and potentially raising funds, engaging people regularly through an event can help create even stronger connections with supporters, which help strengthen the movement.

### Types of Fundraisers and Events

When deciding what kind to organize, think about your community and target audience, plus the needs of your campaign. Decide which might get the best response.

#### Education-oriented Fundraisers

- Film showings
- Book discussions
- Plays
- Musical performances
- Notable speakers
- Teach-ins

#### Action-Oriented Events

- Rallies, public protests at insurance companies, or a hospital that is being shut down
- Public vigils, “die-ins,” or public celebration of Medicare’s Anniversary (July 30) or Human Rights Day (December 10)
- “Speak outs” allow people to come together and talk about the health care crisis, plus learn about what we can do to change it: advocating for single payer health care



## Getting a Location and Food Donated

Try to get as many things donated as possible. You're trying to raise money, not spend it!

- Private homes are nice for this type of event as they're a more intimate setting. Attendees should purchase tickets in advance, often for \$50 or \$100. Provide food and a guest speaker, too. Whether it has a silent auction, raffle, or talk, your goal is to have as much donated as possible.
- See if anybody in your group has a connection to a local eatery. Make a list of places you frequent and ask the owners if they can donate some food for your event.
- Times are tough for “mom-and-pop” shops, so asking larger chains isn't out of the question. Do a little research. Places like Corner Bakery, Panera Bread, and Subway often donate. Contact their corporate headquarters. Ask if they donate food for non-profit fundraisers. If so, is there a local store in your area?



## Ideas

- Put together a committee for the fundraiser. One person should never have to do all the work alone. It is more fun, and less stressful if everyone chips in.
- Your group will want to designate a person to be in charge of the money log. What you have spent, as well as what you are taking. This is usually not a huge task, but it is always a relief not having questions about what is where or who spent what!
- Be creative! The possibilities are endless when it comes to creative ways to raise money.
- Go online and do a little research. It's always okay to “borrow” someone else's brilliant fundraising idea, then make it your own!

### Practical Tip

Connect with Healthcare-NOW! at [healthcare-now.org](http://healthcare-now.org). They have a network of regularly organized national action days. They also promote timely films and books, which can help provide resources for your ongoing organizing.

# SPEAKERS TRAINING

## Why It's Important

Once you become identified as “the single payer person” in your community, when you are out on the street, folks may approach you to come to give a presentation to a group they’re involved with. These are golden opportunities, and they may be groups not normally associated with healthcare issues, i.e., Kiwanis clubs, rotary clubs, small business associations, etc. and that’s what we want.

### Get Out of the Comfort Zone

Outreach to new audiences — as opposed to “preaching to the converted” — we want to move out of the comfort zone of our progressive, liberal communities into the mainstream, and even conservative realms.

#### Who Should Come

It’s ideal to get at least five people. At most, fifteen. Remember, trainings are not educational meetings. These are for people who are serious about going out to speak to groups about single payer.

#### Solicit Speaking Gigs

Make a list of every organization, club or group in town. Submit a letter or make a phone call and inquire if they would be interested in having a guest speaker on Single Payer.

Single payer is not a partisan issue. Healthcare is a basic human right, regardless of political affiliation.

## Finding a Trainer and Resources

So you have enough people interested in attending a speaker’s training, now what? As the leader or organizer of your group, you may not feel prepared or ready to facilitate such a training. But chances are you’re more prepared than you think – so go for it!

- Call the Healthcare-NOW! national office (1-800-453-1305) or your local Healthcare Now! affiliate. See if there is a designated person in your area who can conduct a speakers training.
- Consider a live videoconference with a trainer. After all, it is the 21<sup>st</sup> century!
- If no one is available in your area, you can run the training. YES YOU CAN!

## Prepare in Advance

### Interactive Format

One proven method we use is to have the participants come with a speech he/she prepared in advance, generally 3-5 minutes long. This shows a activist’s level of commitment and interest.

Taking turns, the other participants will critique the speech. In two columns on a large sheet of butcher paper, they suggest what the speaker should keep or change. This gives other participants ideas for their own speeches. It also gives the organizer an idea about what kind of group to whom they could speak, e.g. small business association vs. democratic clubs.



### Find the Right Space

Once you determine how many people are going to attend. Find a meeting space appropriate for the number of expected people. See “how to plan a meeting.”

### Additional Materials

Gather some basic materials about HR 676 for people to base their initial speeches from, Talking points, FAQ’s, sample speeches, etc.

Send these out to all participants well in advance, and insure that they understand WHY they are being asked to prepare speeches beforehand.

### Cover Your Costs

You can ask for donations for the training. We usually offer a sliding scale option (e.g. \$5 to \$50) to pay for the room rental, lunches, and printing costs.

### Training for Tabling

Maybe your group needs some practice before tabling. You could run this type of training the same way, where you ask people to role-play that they are at a farmer’s market or other outreach scenarios.

Have everyone break into teams of two and role-play Q&A. Make sure everyone answers the same set of questions, so that the participants have an opportunity to hear different answers and decide which ones are the best for them. This is fun, and a good way to build confidence, preparing activists for to think on their feet.

### Practical Tip

When preparing a packet to send out to participants ahead of time, edit! Don’t send too much. It can be overwhelming and off-putting to some people, while raising your printing and mailing costs. Pick and choose the information that you feel is best for your specific training. Remember, people can always do their own research — hello Google!

# SPEAKERS TRAINING PART 2

## Before Your Speaking Engagement

- **Know Your Audience**

We have a message, but we always are speaking to a particular audience. What particular issues concern them? Do they have hot buttons? Ask yourself: how can I win this group to this initiative or legislation?

- **Gather Information in Advance**

Who is the group's contact person? How much time for speaking and questions? (Be prepared for less.) Can we have a table? How do we ask for money? Can we take a collection or will the group discuss this by themselves? Can we sign up audience members as volunteers or will they discuss how to help by themselves?

- **Bring Relevant Literature and Someone to Staff a Table**

Example literature to hand out include leaflets, fact sheets, postcards, and information on your group's next meeting(s). The extra helper is useful because a speaker's mind is often preoccupied. It's also practice training new people to table.

- **Bring a Friend**

It is comforting seeing a friendly face in the crowd. Moral support is always nice until you're a natural speech-giver. The first time is the scariest. Putting yourself out there can feel awkward, but speaking to groups is absolutely crucial for the growth of our movement. You have nothing to lose, and everything to gain. It is a very empowering feeling, standing up in front of a room, putting your knowledge and passion to use!

- **PowerPoint**

If you are doing a Powerpoint presentation, make sure you rehearse. A good rule of thumb is to make the font size at least 30, talk for 20 minutes, and only use 10 slides. Test that all your equipment is running properly, batteries are charged, etc!



### Motivation Central

People appreciate you being there! Really, they wouldn't have asked you to come otherwise. Groups are always looking for hot topics and interesting speakers to come and present. They will feel honored you took YOUR time to come and spend it with them. They will be inspired because you're inspired.

## During The Speech

- **Have a Clear Disciplined Message**

Add something for a particular audience.

- **Tell Them What You Are Going to Tell Them**

Tell them. Then tell them what you just told them.

- **Don't Get Bugged Down in Details**

- **Get the Audience's Attention**

Make them say, "Oh, I should care about this." (Example) Give them an emotional reason why you got involved, or ask them a question about their insurance problems.

- **Get the Audience to Form a Mental Picture**

Visual aids are great. In a week, the audience will forget 90% of what you said, but they will remember a mental picture.

- **An Idea Can Be Sold...**

...if it touches their heart or their pocketbook.

- **Let the Audience Know They Can Help Make History**

Suggest some things for them to do. Making a speech is only half of what we are doing. We are also organizing to win a campaign.

- **Open Up the Floor**

This can be the most nerve wracking part, you never know what people will ask... but, time and time again, they consistently ask the questions that you will find on our list of FAQ's and talking points. If you don't know the answer, say so. People know you are not a total expert on this stuff, especially if they come at you with a technical question about financing, taxes, etc. Tell them you will find out the answer, and get back to them.

- **At the End of the Meeting**

Check first with the organizer if this kind of solicitation is acceptable for his or her group. Get permission beforehand! If so, announce your upcoming events, talks, tabling opportunities, etc. Ask people to sign postcards, and encourage them to take some cards. We go speaking to groups to increase awareness and our visibility in the community. However, we are here to organize. The feeling of walking away from an event having added even 5 or 10 more people to your database is awesome. This is how we grow.

# Appendix: Talking About Single Payer

Prepared by Jean Tepperman. Training by Cognitive Policy Works and co-sponsored by Wellstone Democrat Club and Single Payer Now on March 27, 2010.

This is a strategy for discussing single payer health care with people who start out disagreeing with you. The idea is to open their minds to what you are saying, not to confront them in a way that hardens their opposition.

## Understand how people use “frames”

- People think about things with the help of “frames”– mental structures made up of “understandings, values, ideas, and facts” into which they integrate new information and ideas. “Frames trump facts.”
- A “health insurance” frame gets people thinking about money and scarcity, seeing health care as an economic transaction. A “health care” frame brings in people’s feelings about taking care of sick people, the doctor-patient relationship. So it’s good to use ideas that evoke the person’s health care frame.

## Understand the emotional basis of people’s opinions

- People respond more strongly to fear of loss than to cost-benefit analysis
- Injustice triggers disgust; empathy triggers sense of fairness
- People make moral judgments based on emotion, then use reasons to defend it, so just logically refuting their arguments doesn’t work.

## Basic concepts of strategic communication

You need to stake out the moral high ground through being truthful about your own core values. Start there and build communication using common ground and common sense.

## For strategic communication:

- Define what outcomes you want from the conversation
- Articulate your moral vision/stake out a moral high ground—when people are sick they should receive care
- Talk about the big picture (not factoids), be empathetic and hopeful
- Probe and analyze where the person is coming from – what’s motivating them and how they understand the situation. Then speak to their concerns
- Develop trust by finding areas of agreement/commonality and talking about where you’re coming from – be authentic, transparent

## The VIP framework for problem solving:

- Start with your values (moral vision)
- Frame the issue (set the context)
- Articulate your position and support it (here’s where the facts and arguments come in).

## Applying these ideas to discussion about single-payer

## Start with values/moral basis

- Empathy and responsibility
- Human dignity
- Shared prosperity and risk – everyone’s health affects the whole community

## Frame the issue

- Everybody gets sick and needs care
- The problem is people not getting the care they need.
- We’re all in this together

(Don’t just talk. Ask the person about their ideas: What’s the problem? How do you think things should be changed? What can you agree on?)

## Articulate your position

- Only effective government can solve this problem
- We need a responsible and humane system for providing health care
- Support the single payer position with arguments and facts
  - Health insurance abuses
  - Cost effectiveness
  - More and better care

## Discussion of tough issues/brainstorming responses

- Distrust of government
  - Ask about why they feel that way
  - Ask if there’s anything they think government does well – suggest some
  - Talk about “effective” government to counter negative “big” government
  - Underlying fears: I’ll show up and not get the help I need. Distant bureaucracy will make decisions for me and choose my doctor. You can validate those fears, talk about current health insurance companies, how single payer would help.
- We can’t afford it
  - Ask what they’re paying now – compare to single payer
  - Articulate priority on caring for people who are sick
  - Talk about economic costs of current system
- We have the best health care system in the world – single payer would ruin it.
  - Ask what they mean by “best health care system”
  - Single payer would allow people to access this care
  - Single payer could make system better, for example, more primary care and prevention
  - With single payer you keep getting health care if you are laid off, change jobs, get sick.

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For more, visit [cognitivepolicyworks.com](http://cognitivepolicyworks.com), [singlepayernow.org](http://singlepayernow.org), [wellstoneclub.org](http://wellstoneclub.org)



## Appendix: H.R. 676 F.A.Q.

**What is H.R. 676?** H.R. 676, also called the United States National Health Insurance Act, is a bill to create a single-payer, publicly-financed, privately-delivered universal health care program that would cover all Americans without charging co-pays or deductibles. It guarantees access to the highest quality and most affordable health care services regardless of employment, ability to pay or pre-existing health conditions.

**What is “single-payer”?** The term single-payer describes the kind of financing system that H.R. 676 uses. It means that one entity-- in this case, established by the government--handles all billing and payment for health care services. Right now, there are thousands upon thousands of “payers”-- HMOs, PPOs, bill collection agencies, etc. The sheer volume of paperwork required by our current system means that administrative waste accounts for roughly 31% of the money spent on health care [1]. The single-payer system would eliminate the wasteful paperwork and administrative costs, redirecting more of our health care dollars to providing care. Medicare is perhaps the best known single-payer system. Essentially, H.R. 676 would improve Medicare and expand it, so that it covers all Americans, regardless of their income.

**Who will be eligible for health care coverage under H.R. 676?** All Americans will be eligible for health care coverage. Every person who enrolls in the program and receive a United States National Health Insurance Card and individual ID number, and that is all anyone will need to receive care.

**What health care services are covered?** The program established by H.R. 676 will cover all medically-necessary services without charging co-pays or deductibles. The services covered will include: primary care; inpatient, outpatient and emergency hospital care; prescription drugs; durable medical equipment; hearing, dental and vision care; chiropractic treatment; mental health services; and long-term care.

**What about “catastrophic” care? Will I ever reach a limit for coverage?** No. There are no limits on coverage. Just as you will never pay a co-pay or a deductible under the universal national health care program, you will never reach a ceiling on your coverage.

**Will I be able to choose my doctor?** Yes. Patients will have their choice of physicians, providers, hospitals and clinics. The financing will be public, but the providers will all remain private.

**No co-pays or deductibles-- what's the catch? Will I actually pay less for health care?** There is no catch. Both families and employers will pay significantly less for health care. Currently, the average family of four covered by an employer-provided health care plan spends roughly \$4,225 on health care each year, including premiums, services, prescription drugs and supplies. This figure does not include the annual Medicare payroll tax, currently at 1.45%. Under the plan created by H.R. 676, a family of four making the median income

of \$56,200 would pay about \$2,700 in payroll tax for all health care costs. No deductibles, no co-pays, no worrying about catastrophic coverage. Employers who provide health insurance currently pay, on average, 74% of employee health premiums. For a family of four, the average employer share is \$8,510 per year. Under H.R. 676, the employer pays a 4.75% payroll tax, not a premium to health insurance companies. For an employee making the median family income of \$56,200 annually, the employer would pay roughly \$2,700. Estimates taken from: Employer Health Benefits 2006 Annual Survey, Kaiser Family Foundation and Health Research and Educational Trust; Consumer Expenditure Survey, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics; and Study by the Center for Economic Research and Policy.

**How will the transition to the new system work?** The full conversion to a non-profit, single-payer universal health care program will not take place overnight once the bill is passed. The total transition time will be roughly a 15-year period. Important elements of the transition will include:

- Private health insurance companies will be prohibited from selling coverage that duplicates any benefits included in the universal national health care program. The private companies will, however, still be able to sell coverage for services that are not deemed medically necessary, such as many cosmetic surgery procedures.
- Private insurance company workers who are displaced as a result of the transition will be the first to be hired and retained by the new single-payer entity. Any of the displaced workers who are not rehired will receive two years of unemployment benefits.

**How will the universal program be paid for?** First, switching to a single-payer system will lead to billions of dollars saved in reduced administrative costs. Those savings will be passed on through the system and allow coverage for all Americans. Additional savings in the overall cost of health care will come from annual reimbursement rate negotiations with physicians and negotiated prices for prescription drugs, medical supplies and equipment. Second, a “Medicare For All Trust Fund” will be created to ensure a dedicated source of funding in addition to annual appropriations. Sources of funding will include:

- Maintain current federal and state funding for existing health care programs
- Closing corporate tax loopholes
- Repealing the Bush tax cuts for the highest income earners
- Establish employer/employee payroll tax of 4.75% (includes present 1.45% Medicare tax)
- Establish a 5% health tax on the top 5% of income earners; a 10% tax on top 1% of wage earners
- One quarter of one percent stock transaction tax

Source URL: <http://www.johnconyers.com/hr676faq>

Links: [1] [http://www.pnhp.org/single\\_payer\\_resources/administrative\\_waste\\_consumes\\_31\\_percent\\_of\\_health\\_spending.php](http://www.pnhp.org/single_payer_resources/administrative_waste_consumes_31_percent_of_health_spending.php)

# **Hijacked**

## **The Road to Single Payer in the Aftermath of Stolen Health Care Reform 2010**

On the positive side of the ledger, the PPACA (Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act) brings some welcome changes.

On the negative side of the ledger, however, these are some of the reasons that the PPACA will fall so far short of needed health care reform that it is not much better than nothing:

### **Bill Moyers on John Geyman's "HIJACKED"**

"You think the battle for real health care reform is over? John Geyman says 'Not on your life!' And, by the way, your life is what's at stake. This former Republican country doctor and long-time respected scholar, editor, and advocate for reform that puts the patient, not the industry, first, has issued an informed, convincing, and passionate account of why the battle has just begun, and how we, the people, can win." Bill Moyers, author of "Moyers on Democracy"

**Sat. 3:00pm Oct. 23**  
**255 Ninth St – SF**

At ILWU Local 6 Union Hall  
2 blocks south of Market between Howard and Folsom  
Civic Center BART/MUNI

Come to a presentation and discussion with

**John Geyman**, author of "Hijacked...." John Geyman is Professor Emeritus of Family Medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine.)

**Sponsored by Single Payer Now**

For more Information call 415-695-7891 or email [dbechler@value.net](mailto:dbechler@value.net)

Co-sponsored by Physicians for a National Health Program and the California Alliance for Retired Americans

[www.singlepayernow.net](http://www.singlepayernow.net)

labor donated posted 9/24/10

Save the Date  
Sat. 3pm October 23  
in San Francisco

## **Hijacked**

### **The Road to Single Payer in the Aftermath of Stolen Health Care Reform 2010**

Dear Single Payer Healthcare Activist,  
I hope you can attend and help build our Oct 23 meeting in San Francisco. The meeting features John Geyman, author of Hijacked. See announcement below.

Please let us know if you can attend and how you can help build the meeting.

- ☐ I plan to attend the Oct 23 meeting.
- ☐ I can come at 2:20 to help set up.
- ☐ I have forwarded this alert.
- ☐ I can help call our phone tree. I will send out names and scripts around Oct 15.
- ☐ I can help get out the mail for this event on Fri. Oct 8 or Sat Oct 9 between noon and 8pm. I will come on \_\_\_ day around \_\_\_ time.
- ☐ I will post the attached leaflet at work or in a coffee shop.
- ☐ I can make a financial contribution for this event. To contribute, [click here](#).

Or you can send a check to

Single Payer Now  
PO Box 460622  
SF, CA 94146

Note: I will be out of the state from Sept. 11 to Oct 4.

Thank you.

Don Bechler

Chair – Single Payer Now

415-695-7891

[www.singlepayernow.net](http://www.singlepayernow.net)

## Appendix: Sample 3-minute Talk

Hello. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am speaking for Health Care Now. We work for universal health care and I am speaking today to encourage you to support House Resolution 676, the United States National Healthcare Act.

### **Our current health care situation:**

In the United States we have no health care plan. We are the only industrialized nation to not have a health care plan. Because we have no plan, we suffer. The World Health Organization ranks the US 37<sup>th</sup> in health care outcomes.

### **The good news is that there is a solution.**

86 Members of Congress have sponsored HR 676 which is a plan that provides reliable health care for everyone, spends our resources wisely, is comprehensive, and is publicly accountable. These values we share as a nation. Our country was founded on the vision we protect and empower people to flourish as human beings.

### **HR 676 delivers health care to everyone.**

We do not share the insurance companies' vision of denying care.. Our vision is health care for all.

### **HR 676 spends our money wisely.**

We would fold in the Medicare, Medicaid, and other government money along with a payroll tax on both the employee and the employer into one public fund. By consolidating these funds, we rid ourselves from the current wasteful bureaucracies caused by the 10,000 insurance plans and dozens of government programs. We would pay taxes in lieu of premiums, but they would be less than current insurance company premiums. This would mean a healthier economy with more money in the pockets of business and working people.

### **HR 676 delivers comprehensive care...**

...including full mental health care and prescription drugs. It covers dental and vision care. There are no co-pays, or deductibles. We have full choice of provider. No longer can an employer or insurance company tell what doctors you can visit.

### **Lastly, HR 676 is publicly accountable.**

With HR 676, we will have a healthcare director selected by our elected legislators. We the residents of the residents of the United States will be in charge of our health care, not the insurance industry.

### **To win HR 676, we need all of working together.**

Please sign up at the volunteer table. We have postcards that you can send to legislators. This is a movement of compassion. Please consider working for a country that cares.

## Appendix: Sample Press Release

Subject: Health Care Supporters Say "Hands Off Our Medicare!"

Contact: [NAME, NUMBER, AND E-MAIL GO HERE]

Date: [DATE GOES HERE]

Don't let Congress Cut Medicare: Improve It and Expand It to All

For decades, Medicare's critics have warned of impending doom for the program but it always gets repaired. Here's our suggested fix: eliminate the massive waste and expense caused by the private it to all from birth to death!"

Since its establishment in 1965, Medicare has been a national treasure providing coverage to 45 million people money goes directly to health care and not bloated administration or advertising which consumes one third of the health care dollar spent in the private sector.

This anniversary holds special weight because of the formation of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Social Security as soon as this December.

Affiliates of HCN (Healthcare-NOW!) have organized dozens of actions nationwide to bring attention to the birthday of Medicare and the actions of the Deficit Commission. "We aren't going to be silent about threats to our most successful social insurance programs," states Sandy Fox of the Western PA Coalition for Single Payer Health Care. "Medicare and Social Security aren't adding to the deficit. If the Deficit Commission were serious about curbing costs, they would examine HR 676, 'Expanded and Improved Medicare for All' care."

Katie Robbins, HCN's National Organizer addressed the Deficit Commission at the public meeting held in June, "Since H.R. 676 was introduced in 2003, it has received tremendous support including endorsements by 582 union organizations in 49 states, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, 63 local governments which include 10 of the nation's 30 largest cities...and the majority of nurses, patients, and physicians."

HCN and its supporters are urging Members of Congress and Federal Candidates to take a pledge declaring that they will protect Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security taking them off the table of the Deficit up for national discussion.

HCN has recently launched a website, Hands Off Our Medicare ([www.handsoffourmedicare](http://www.handsoffourmedicare)), which aims to inform all who are interested and concerned about the activities of the Deficit Commission by providing updates Social Medicare, Social Security and Medicaid.

# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

## Healthcare-NOW!

Healthcare-NOW! is an education and advocacy organization that addresses the health insurance crisis in the U.S by advocating for the passage of national, single-payer healthcare legislation. Right now, the National Health Insurance Act (HR 676) is the only legislation that will create a national, single-payer healthcare system. We see healthcare as a human right, not a privilege tied to the ability to pay.

1315 Spruce Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
800-453-1305  
[www.healthcare-now.org](http://www.healthcare-now.org)  
[info@healthcare-now.org](mailto:info@healthcare-now.org)

## Single Payer Now

Single Payer Now is a grassroots advocacy group in California. We educate and organize activists to advocate for health care without the insurance industry. In California, we support SB 810, the California Universal Health Care Act; and in Congress, HR 676, the U.S. National Health Care Act.

P.O. Box 460622  
San Francisco, CA 94146  
415-695-7891  
[www.singlepayernow.net](http://www.singlepayernow.net)  
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