

A MATTER OF HEALTH...A MATTER OF WHOLENESS

Today health care reform has become an urgent priority, with many Americans fearful about the health care they now hold and more than 45 million lacking coverage altogether. Rising unemployment, underemployment and a decline in employment benefits have deprived many more of health care. The health of our neighbors and the wholeness of the nation now require that all segments of our society join in finding a solution to this national challenge.

"...Learn to do good, seek justice; rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow." Isaiah 1:17

"...Love your neighbor as you love yourself." Matthew 22:39

"...Ye who believe! Stand up firmly for Allah, witness to justice...be just, that is next to piety." Qur'an 5:8

Our diverse communities of faith -Jewish, Christian and Muslim- are each shaped and guided by our respective sacred texts which compel us to speak out on behalf of the most vulnerable members of our society. Today that means making comprehensive and compassionate health care reform an urgent priority so that all of our neighbors, especially the people living in poverty, children, and the aged, can be assured of the fullness of life that is central to the holy vision of a beloved and peaceable community.

No longer can we afford to squander the hopes and dreams of the American people through a much-too-costly system that contributes to economic despair. Families and individuals must be able to rely on affordable care in times of illness or accident and preventative care to safeguard health and well-being. Those who are ill need the assurance that coverage will not be canceled by illness or employment circumstance. They should also be afforded the dignity of selecting their own caregivers.

Today we pray, each in our own custom, for discernment, boldness, clarity and leadership in each segment of our society so that we may find the resolve to achieve health reform worthy of this land. As we together pursue this vision our direction is certain-it is toward the common good. The prospect of high-quality, affordable health care for everyone is a measure of our wholeness as a nation.

We pray that our best minds and kindest hearts might be joined in this effort so that all men, women and children will have the health care they need to live the lives for which they were created. We stand ready to give our support and energies to its achievement.

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