

Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
Position Statement on Health Care Reform
Adopted October 21, 2009

As Congress and the Obama Administration move forward in developing health care reform legislation, nonprofit organizations are convinced that major action is needed from three vantage points:

- as employers purchasing health insurance for employees and their families,
- as providers of medical care serving many people without health insurance, and
- as advocates for the needs of local communities.

Nonprofit organizations, which employ 10 percent of Minnesota's workforce, provide health benefits to thousands of families and children in Minnesota. Despite similar and often excessive financial challenges, nonprofit employers exceed other small businesses in offering health benefits to their employees—87 percent of nonprofit employers offer health benefits according to MCN's *2008 Nonprofit Salary and Benefit Survey*, while 43 percent of U.S. small businesses do the same, according to a recent study by Pricewaterhouse Coopers. Some health care reform proposals have failed to include nonprofit organizations in provisions to help employers provide coverage or to exempt them from new employer mandates, which threatens nonprofits' ability to continue providing benefits to their employees.

The Minnesota Council of Nonprofits believes that the following principles should be incorporated into federal health care reform legislation:

1. Support for Small Employers, Including Nonprofit Employers

In Minnesota, most nonprofits offer health care coverage to their employees. However, nonprofit employers face escalating health insurance costs that make it extremely difficult for them to continue offering affordable health care coverage to their employees. Provisions in federal health care legislation to help small employers afford coverage, or any exemptions from employer requirements, must apply to all kinds of employers, including nonprofits.

2. Make Health Care Affordable for Low-Income Minnesotans

Expanding access to affordable, quality health care is sound public policy. Any health care reform legislation must include simplified and improved Medicaid coverage, as well as adequate subsidies to enable Minnesotans to purchase affordable, quality health insurance through the private market or through any new public option, health insurance exchange or cooperative that may be created. MCN only supports an individual mandate or requirement to purchase health insurance under these conditions.

3. Provide Adequate Federal Funding

The expansion of affordable, quality health care should be paired with a package of funding provisions that is progressive overall. Federal health care reform should not shift costs from the federal government to the states. Expansion of the Medicaid program or other means of health coverage should be paid for by the federal government. We recognize that growing federal budget deficits threaten the federal government's ability to fund its priorities. Therefore, federal health care reform legislation should include adequate financing mechanisms, rather than add to the federal deficit.

4. Contain Unsustainable Cost Increases

It is both appropriate and critical for Congress to enact specific and measurable strategies to reverse the escalating costs of health care. MCN supports enacting reforms, including the creation of a public option, that result in identified savings in premiums and costs for individuals and employers.

To achieve these principles, MCN urges Congress to adopt comprehensive health care reform.