



January 22, 2015

Representative John Conyers, Jr.  
2426 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, DC, 20515

Honorable Congressman Conyers,

Thank you for your longtime leadership on the issue of creating universal, publicly funded health care in the U.S.

Health Care for All Oregon is a statewide coalition of over 100 organizations and 13,000 individuals organizing and advocating for single payer healthcare in Oregon and nationwide.

The Health Care for All Oregon Board has recently voted to endorse HR 676, the Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Act. However, it is concerned that Section 101 (d) would give the Secretary of HHS unacceptable discretion to define residency requirements in a manner that would violate HCAO principles of true universality and of equity, specifically including discretion to define undocumented persons and perhaps other categories of documented immigrants as non-residents. HCAO therefore rejects Section 101 (d) of HR 676 and would like to see it removed or modified.

The Board has directed our Legislative Committee to engage with our national allies and fellow advocates in other states to seek improvement of HR 676 to clarify that no person living in the U.S. shall be excluded from coverage for reasons of documentation or immigration status.

HCAO specifically asks you, Congressman Conyers, as the primary author of the bill, and a key leader and ally in our movement, to work on such an improvement. We note that earlier versions of H.R. 676 did not grant the Secretary of HHS this power to define residency. We understand that there are potential issues related to so-called medical tourism, or persons coming to the United States solely for access to medical care, but think Section 101 (d) is not the right approach.

Please direct communication to discuss eliminating or amending Section 101 (d) of HR 676 to Mark Kellenbeck, HCAO Legislative Committee chair, at (541) 499-1319 or via e-mail at [mkellenbeck@msn.com](mailto:mkellenbeck@msn.com)

Thanks for your time and consideration in this matter.

Lee Mercer, President  
Health Care for All-Oregon (HCAO)

cc. HCAO Board, Senators Merkley, Wyden and Sanders, Rep. James McDermott, Vanessa Beck and Ben Day (Health Care-NOW!), Mark Dudzic (Labor Campaign for Single Payer), Matthew Petty, Ida Hellander, Steffie Woolhandler, Margaret Flowers (Physicians for A National Health Plan), Russell Mokhiber (Single Payer Action), Rose Ann DeMoro and Michael Lighty (National Nurses United), Bill Honigman and Donna Smith (Progressive Democrats of America), James Haslan (Vermont Workers Center), Deb Richter (Vermont for Single Payer)