



It's Time to Add Your Voice

PNHPWW May 20th Meeting/Monthly Report

We had 24 attendees for this meeting focused on plans for the May 30th march. Also, we had our first go at a SKYPE conversation with a far-away notable in the cause of health care reform when Mark AlMBERG, PNHP Director of Communications, joined us from his home in Chicago.

Introductions - Don Mitchell, PNHPWW Chair welcomed the 24 attendees who introduced themselves.

Coordinator's Report – David McLanahan - Our Email list is slowly increasing – now at 430 after the meeting. We have \$1281.79 in the treasury after donating \$100 for the May 30th March and \$175 to Washington Public Campaigns for a half page message in their Annual Awards Dinner program. We still have 30 of the 50 T-shirts we ordered (if you would like one - \$15, contact pnhpwesternwashington@comcast.net).

The web site had 8062 hits in April. Currently, you can watch video of the original “Baucus 13” protests during second Senate Finance Committee hearing(<http://www.pnhpwesternwashington.org/Images/Sequence%201-Baucus%20Demonstration-H.264%20300Kbps%20Streaming.mov>) and listen to the PNHP spot ad that will be aired on KUOW 48 times over the next two weeks (<http://www.pnhpwesternwashington.org/multimedia/Fabert.aiff>) - see below.

Report from PNHP National – See Conversation with Mark AlMBERG below.

Recent Activities

Radio Interviews – KSER, Everett and another Tacoma station – David McL - 15 minute interviews re single payer. John Geyman had a more extended interview on KSER.

May 16th - 65th Street Change Gang “Winning Health Care for All” forum at Town Hall. This was a very well put together event that was broadcast by local TV and podcast by Radio 1090. 170 people attended. In the first hour, moderator Bev Spears, Legislative Director of WaCAN, interviewed Congressman Jim McDermott. In the second hour, David McL and Teresita Batayola, ED of International Health Services gave brief

presentations and joined Jim for a panel discussion. The focus was on what are the prospects for meaningful health care reform in this Congressional session, single payer and the public option, and what advocates can do to push things forward. The conclusion? – everyone needs to keep pressure on their representatives and progressives work for unity. From a single payer perspective – keep advocating for SP with the goal of pulling legislation in that direction. You can listen to the podcast at <http://www.am1090seattle.com/pages/218296.php>

HCFA-WA/PNHPWW Action Team Meetings – monthly meetings are being held in 5 areas in & around King County based on neighboring legislative districts. Chuck Richards of HCFA-Wa has taken the lead with co-sponsorship from PNHPWW. The idea is to focus on what can be done locally to influence local reps and bring more friends and neighbors into the fight for single payer at federal and state levels. These meetings have attracted 8 – 12 people and will continue in the coming months. For more information - <http://www.healthcareforallwa.org/local-action-teams/>

Senate Finance Committee events and lobbying – Along with thousands of others across the country, we made lots of phone calls and sent lots of emails and letters to our reps to have a single payer advocate invited to testify before the Senate Finance Committee hearings on health care reform, chaired by Sen. Max Baucus of Montana. 13 SP supporters, including at least 3 PNHP members, were arrested for vocally protesting during two of the hearings. These actions generated lots of media attention (Ed Schultz of MSNBC and radio talk show host, emerged as a particular champion of SP), news articles, Op-Eds, and letters to the Ed (**see attachment**). These actions moved our cause forward by widely publicizing the injustice of single payer being ruled out of the discussion by our politicians, even as a clear majority of Americans support this approach. Thanks to those courageous advocates who risk jail time and heavy fines.

No thanks to our Senator Maria Cantwell, who sits on the Finance Committee and refused to join Sen. Schumer of New York who would have requested Sen. Baucus to invite SP testimony had he gotten just one other committee member to join with him. Sen. Cantwell did have a staff member call Quentin Young at the PNHP national office to convey her decision and offer to “speak with him about it.” Ask her how her decision to join in the conspiracy to “keep single payer off the table” jives with her responsibility to represent her constituents, or was that duty trumped by a need to support her big money campaign contributors.

Future Activities/Events

KUOW 94.9 FM Radio spots –The Martin-Fabert Foundation (PNHPWW member Ken Fabert) has arranged to have 48 spots on KUOW broadcast over 5/22 – 6/03 that bring attention to PNHP and give web site contact info. Thanks to Ken for thinking of this way

to publicize single payer and for his family's generosity. You can hear the spot at - <http://www.pnhpwesternwashington.org/multimedia/Fabert.aiff>

May 26th 7PM – Health Care Forum, KC Democrats Central Committee Meeting, Carpenters Hall, Renton. PNHPWW member Lisa Plymate, who is a KC Dems Central Committee member, arranged this forum. PNHPWW members Chris Toal, Hugh Foy, and David Baughan and HCFA-Wa President Larry Kalb will speak. The meeting is open to the public.

May 30th – Mothers Leading the Way March This will be a huge event with an estimated 5000 – 10,000 people marching through the streets of downtown Seattle on Saturday afternoon, demonstrating for “Health Care for All in 2009.” It will likely be the largest such demonstration in the US so far this decade. More than 150 organizations have endorsed it. 13 buses have been chartered from across the state.

PNHPWW will have a contingent marching under our banner, carrying single payer signs. Wear white coats and your T-shirts. We have signs with “Health Care for All Equals Single Payer” or Health Justice Equals Single Payer” on one side and the T-Shirt graphic on the other. If you would like to pick up a sign at the rally please message pnhpwesternwashington@comcast.net We will have information to hand out. Consider what we might chant to call more attention to SP (bring a bullhorn). Some PNHPWW members have volunteered for a medical first aid team to provide medical support.

Adam Ballinger and fellow UW students will be carrying a huge inflatable doctor with a single payer health care card (**see attached**). Around this inflatable would be a good place for our contingent to assemble at noon in Pratt Park where the march begins with a short program where Sen. Patty Murray will address the crowd. March details including program, speakers, endorsing organizations and bus schedules can be found at <http://www.may30march.org>

The organizers have also urgently requested more volunteers to be “peacekeepers” or marshals – to keep people off sidewalks & moving in the right direction, etc (martial arts skills not necessary). There is one more training session – Tuesday, May 26, 6-8pm at the Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue, Seattle. If you can do this, ASAP please message pnhp.westernwashington@comcast.net

June 13, Washington Public Campaigns (aka WashClean) Awards Dinner, South Seattle Community College Campus in West Seattle. See www.washclean.org for details.

Increasingly, PNHPWW has been working with WashClean as the importance of “marrying” the advocacy of health care reform and public campaign finance

reform is becoming increasingly obvious (see Senate Finance Committee events) and can only move forward together. Support WashClean by attending the dinner. As noted, PNHPWW will have a half-page message in the dinner program.

WashClean has taken the lead in arranging for two, possibly more, health care forums in our area in June, when the reform options in DC will be more defined. They have tentatively found sites in Tacoma (June 23rd) and Everett (June 25th). PNHPWW and HCFA-Wa have agreed to work on these events with financial, speaker and publicity support. WashClean is doing a forum in Spokane this weekend in conjunction with the new PNHP Inland Northwest Chapter.

A Conversation with Mark Alberg, PNHP Communications Director – this was a test and first invitation to a guest expert/notable to be part of our monthly meeting via SKYPE - from the comfort of their home wherever across the country. Although the video on Mark's side worked in testing prior to the meeting, it failed during the meeting itself so we couldn't see his handsome face. But the audio was loud and clear 98% of the time. This is a feature worth continuing.

Mark did a nice job on bringing us up to date on the hubbub around the Baucus hearings and the valuable publicity for single payer it engendered. He described PNHP's continuing position that we should never give up advocating for single payer, even as it may recede from the general discussion as the focus for most advocates moves onto what sort of a public option "compromise" Congress will design. Continuing forceful SP advocacy will help push Congress to the left.

In the Q&A, attendees pretty much agreed that any public option must include single payer principles of being open to everyone, one level of comprehensive care, free choice, and publicly financed – the so-called Medicare model. And that private insurance must be federally regulated to a degree not seen before.

Mark indicated that the PNHP brain trust is actively grappling with the issue of how to respond to the public option as it materializes, but that an endorsement or recommendation to allocate much in the way of resources would be highly unlikely because any public option would still have to exist in a multipayer system, thereby failing to recoup a significant portion of the administrative savings of a single payer system - those savings necessary to eliminate un- and under-insurance and achieve a sustainable system. Also, that regulating the

medical industrial complex in any real way has never been done and would be unlikely with this Congress.

Submitted by

David McLanahan
Coordinator, PNHPWW

Next Meeting – Wednesday, June 17th, 7PM, Cherry Hill Auditorium.

Bill Moyers