

## HEALTH CARE IS A HUMAN RIGHT

On Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, the Great Hall in the Tangeman Center at the University of Cincinnati was packed to its' capacity of 800 with many people re-routed to an overflow room. What brought me and close to 1,0000 Cincinnatians out on a Tuesday morning? Health Care Reform. Most people came to hear Senator Sherrod Brown explain health care reform that is pending before Congress.

A panel of speakers gave powerful stories on why health reform is important now: from loved ones lost due to inadequate care, inability to get care because of pre-existing conditions, working but not having health insurance so that preventative care is unavailable and health problems spiral out of control, to small businesses dropping coverage because they just can no longer afford coverage.

Senator Brown spoke about the need for reform: spiraling costs to families, spiraling cost to business and the spiraling cost to the country. Senator Brown talked about our values that unite us and for the need for a strong public option that he strongly supports and co-authored on the Health, Education, and Pensions Committee.

Cassandra Barham, Contact Center member and one of the panelists, said, "I had health coverage for many years. Unfortunately, my employer was no longer able to provide insurance. That is when I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Thankfully, I've been cancer free for 1

year. I've been trying to buy insurance myself, but have not found a company who'll cover me due to my pre-existing condition of breast cancer and high blood pressure."

"Illness and disease doesn't care if you have insurance or not. Any one of us can be a step away from an accident or an illness. Health care is a right."

When Ms. Barham said this the participants in the room against health care reform shouted, "No it's not...it's a privilege."

Unfortunately there were some attendees who did not want to see the current health care reform. They shouted at people telling their stories, calling them liars. They shouted at the Senator calling him a liar and were generally disruptive.

Afterwards, reflecting on the event, Ms. Barham said, "It is sad to see people so angry over health care reform. Health care reform is what it says: health CARE reform. I'm concerned that so many people like me, the insured or the uninsured voices are being drowned out by a minority of people not interested discussing reform. I hope today the Senator heard the majority in the room who support reform. The majority who want him to go back to Congress next week and pass progressive health care reform."

..... Katy Heins

***SAVE THE DATE!!!***  
**NATIONAL CONFERENCE TO CREATE LIVING-WAGE  
JOBS FOR ALL, MEET HUMAN NEEDS &  
SUSTAIN THE ENVIRONMENT**  
**New York City, Friday & Saturday, November 13-14, 2009**

Our country is in the throes of an economic crisis—the most severe since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Unemployment is at the disaster level. And even before the onset of our current, deep recession, chronic unemployment, low and stagnant wages, myriad unmet needs and unprecedented environmental degradation were endemic.

**Current Job Crisis**

Nearly 30 million workers fully or partially jobless (June 2009)

Most rapid job loss of any downturn since the Great Depression

5 million fewer jobs in the U.S. economy since the onset of the recession.

High unemployment expected to persist, even if the economy “recovers.”

Many of the long-term unemployed will lose benefits, their savings, their homes and more

**Weak Stimulus**

By the Administration’s own estimate, the economic stimulus will make up for a fraction of the millions of jobs lost since the recession began. Nor will the Stimulus stem the continuing job hemorrhage.

**“Good Old Days”**

Even in “good” times: 5 million or more women and men were officially jobless; hidden unemployment afflicted many millions more; and poverty wages were rampant.

Inequality reigned, our infrastructure was crumbling, and human services fell far short of needs.

We must not go back to those “Good Old Days.” Instead, we should be guided by President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1933): “We cannot be content, no matter how high the general standard of living may be, if some fraction of our people...is ill-fed, ill-clothed, ill-housed, and insecure.”

**Real Reform**

Now is the time to organize and mobilize to create a just economy—one that assures living wage jobs for all, sustains the environment, and repairs our social and physical infrastructure.

Join a coalition of labor, religious, anti-poverty, community action organizations...& concerned people. Attend & support the National Conference in New York. Help to organize similar conferences all over the United States. Plan a Mass Demonstration for Economic Justice in Washington, D.C.

**For more information, to make reservations, to participate in planning the conference and subsequent action:  
Visit the website of the National Jobs for All Coalition, [www.njfac.org](http://www.njfac.org)  
Telephone, 212-972-9877 to register for the November conference or  
E-mail [njfac@njfac.org](mailto:njfac@njfac.org) to register for the November conference.**

**National Jobs for All Coalition**

## CONTACT CENTER MEMBERSHIP

The Contact Center is a non-profit community based organization of low and moderate income persons, based in Over-the-Rhine. We believe that justice that begins in neighborhoods can challenge the conscience of the whole city. Located in one of Cincinnati's poorest neighborhoods, the Contact Center has a forty-one year history of organizing on neighborhood issues of housing, improving neighborhood schools, and an economic safety net, both local and statewide. Our vision is for a better life for all low-income persons in our city, our state and nationally.

Your contribution will support our ongoing educational programs, community outreach, and social action work. Members receive updates on legislation and action alerts. Hamilton County residents are eligible for a Holiday Food basket drawing each year.

### Membership

Join today and become a member of an organization  
that will change the system.  
Your support is important and needed.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$5.00 low-income

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 non low-income

\_\_\_\_\_ \$15.00 Grassroots organization

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50.00 Non-Profit organization

\_\_\_\_\_ Donation

*Thank You for Your Support!!!*

**Children's Sabbath Community Forum  
Friday, October 16, 5:30 PM  
Location: Contact Center,  
1227 Vine St., Cincinnati**

Join us to call awareness to the needs of children living in poverty right here in Cincinnati, OH!!

Policymakers and candidates for City Council & School Board have been invited to hear community residents' concerns.

Light Refreshments.

**Please RSVP for child care by Oct. 9th  
513/381-4242**

Children's Sabbath is held in collaboration with the National Children's Defense Fund's Annual Children's Sabbath 3rd Weeken Each October.

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**CONTACT CENTER'S  
HOLIDAY TOY SALE  
DEC. 1 - 24**

**Needed: New and gently used toys,  
items for all ages, household goods.**

Toy Sale benefits the organizing work of Contact Center:

for a stronger economic safety net, health care reform, kinship care and improved neighborhood school!!

**Call 513/381-4242**

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**Benefit Rights Advocacy Group  
(BRAG) Meetings**

Thursday, Oct. 8; Thursday, Nov. 12  
12:00 Noon Potluck

Contact Center, 1227 Vine St., Cincinnati

**Contact Center  
Volunteer Appreciation  
Dinner**

Thursday, Nov. 5  
5:30 PM

Location: St. John Unitarian  
Universalist Church,  
320 Resor Ave.

Cincinnati, OH 45220

Call 513/381-4242

\$20 per person

***Please consider sponsoring a low-income or no-income volunteer.***

Food donations are also welcome: canned non-perishables, pies, cakes, no-sugar desserts for diabetics, \$\$\$ donations for purchasing food. For more information call Cassandra or Lynn at 513/381-4242.

***Will Wallace, pictured below, will be performing original songs at the Dinner. A night of great food, great music & great speakers!!! Join us Nov. 5th!!!***

