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INTERNATIONAL UNION, UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA-UAW

ELIZABETH BUNN, Secretary-Treasurer

March 2, 2009

To: Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and Members of the Public Health Committee

From: Robert Madore, Director

Re: RB 6600 AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUSTINET PLAN.

Good afternoon, my name is Beverley Brakeman and I am the Community Action Program Council Representative for UAW Region 9A. I am here on behalf of our Director Robert Madore to urge your passage of RB 6600 AAC The Establishment of the Sustinet Plan.

There is no reason for me to elaborate on the plan's merit as you have heard very detailed information and data to substantiate this proposal. However, there are several components of this proposal before you today that are particularly exciting:

1. **Pooling large numbers of people for healthcare:** Using the state employee plan as a pool to be grown in membership by those in Medicaid and saga ensures that costs can be kept down, risk can be spread and healthcare can be provided to more people.
2. **The medical home:** It is my estimation that the primary care provider model many of us currently have falls far short of the proposed medical home included in this bill. The medical home proposed in this bill include care coordination, 24 hour consultive services and patient education – all critically important ways in which to improve our current healthcare delivery system.
3. **Electronic medical records:** I don't have to tell any of you how this would streamline our healthcare system and help patients. It seems that every visit to a doctor, emergency room or specialist requires a recap of our medical history which could be avoided with an electronic medical record system as proposed in this bill.
4. **Financing Mechanism:** This plan has a financing mechanism that we believe is fiscally responsible and political feasible.
5. **Benefits:** The benefits included in the Sustinet plan are both preventive, address chronic illness and are comprehensive.
6. **Uninsured:** There are built in mechanisms for those who are uninsured to become insured.



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7. **Accountability:** There is a built in mechanism to measure Sustinet's effectiveness in providing quality healthcare coverage while controlling healthcare costs.

8. **Immigrants:** No one will be denied access to health coverage based on their immigration status.

All of that said, this is a big plan designed to address a big problem. Despite the economic times this is not the time for incrementalism and microcosmic thinking. It is the time to act now and act big and rather than be daunted by the challenges of this plan's implementation tap into your collective creativity to figure out how to get it done.

We must not allow ourselves to become like the system we oppose.

Bishop Desmond Tutu

Thank you.