

## *Help to preserve Medicaid family coverage*

"Ellen" (not her real name) is a single mother with two young children. She earns \$8/hour for 30 hours' work – below the federal poverty level. She suffers from asthma, which she is able to manage with medication and regular physician care, so her condition doesn't keep her from working. Ellen cannot afford to buy the insurance her employer offers, and she couldn't afford to pay for her care. Fortunately, Ellen has health coverage under Healthy Families Medicaid.

But, the Governor's proposed cutback in eligibility for working parents is creating a big problem for her. If current eligibility is rolled back, she will lose her coverage.

Transitional Medicaid may protect her for up to one year. But, after that, how will she

pay for her prescriptions and doctors' visits? Will she buy medicine instead of paying the rent? Will she become too sick to continue working? Will she and her kids end up on cash assistance, costing the state more?

Up to 50,000 low-income working parents, like "Ellen," with incomes below the federal poverty level, will lose their Medicaid coverage under Governor Taft's proposed budget for the biennium beginning July 1, 2003.

### **CUTTING MEDICAID IS PENNY WISE AND POUND FOOLISH**

The cuts will hurt everyone in Ohio:  
*Low income, uninsured people live sicker*

and die younger, because they cannot get the care they need.

Employers face increased absenteeism and turnover from uninsured employees with untreated medical conditions.

Health providers face an increased burden from uncompensated care. Part of these costs are shifted, leading to higher insurance premiums; part of these costs are absorbed, weakening the financial status of hospitals and providers.

Ohio's economy loses federal money from cutting Medicaid spending; every dollar of state spending reductions costs Ohio \$3.15 in lost business activity, plus lost jobs, spending, and declining state income tax revenue.

### **What you can do to help save Medicaid for working parents:**

**1. Contact state legislators. Urge them to restore Medicaid for working parents up to the federal poverty level, in the '04-'05 state budget:**

Larry Householder, Spker of Ohio House of Representatives, Riffe Center, 77 S. High St. Cols. OH 43266; (614) 466-2500; Rep. Merle Kearns, Chair of House Finance Committee Human Services Subcommittee, (614) 466-2038. Legislator info: [www.legislature.state.oh.us](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us)

**2. Contact Senators Voinovich and DeWine (1-800-205-6446) and urge them to support increasing the federal matching rate for Medicaid (FMAP).**

FMAP is the amount of federal funds states receive to match state Medicaid spending. Increasing FMAP would lower state Medicaid spending without cutting benefits.

**3. Join the Ohio Family Coverage Coalition and local coalitions in Cleveland, Columbus, and other cities.**

Contact, in Columbus, Kim Dill (614-253-4340, [kimdill@uhcanohio.org](mailto:kimdill@uhcanohio.org)) or, in Cleveland, Cindy Maxey (216-241-8422, [cjmaxey@uhcanohio.org](mailto:cjmaxey@uhcanohio.org)).

### *Get involved in Cover The Uninsured Week: March 10-16*

*In the US, 41 million people are uninsured. Most are working to support their families. Cover the Uninsured Week, a campaign to bring national attention to the issues of the uninsured, will include events in Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati and Youngstown. See page 3 for details on how to participate.*

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## Cutting Medicaid means big losses to Ohio's economy

Money spent by states on Medicaid pulls in new federal dollars that would not otherwise flow into the state. Out of every dollar spent on Medicaid, the state contributes 41 cents and the federal government contributes 59 cents. These new dollars pass from one person to another in successive rounds of spending. Economists call this the multiplier effect.

For Ohio, every Medicaid dollar generates \$3.15 in business activity, fueling the economy in your district.

The estimated state savings from cutting back on parents' eligibility is \$33 million (state dollars). According to a recent report from Families USA, a \$33 million cut in State Medicaid spending will cost Ohio: \$102,960,000 in lost business activity; 1,112 lost jobs; and \$37,290,000 in employee wages lost.

***“For Ohio, every Medicaid dollar generates \$3.15 in business activity, fueling the economy in your district.”***

State legislators should consider the dire economic impact on Ohio's economy of cutting Medicaid, as they weigh options to balance the state budget.

Data from “Medicaid: Good Medicine for State Economies,” Families USA, January 2003, available at [www.familiesusa.org](http://www.familiesusa.org). A new, Ohio-specific report on county-level impacts of Medicaid cutbacks in Ohio is due to be released in late February. See [www.uhcanohio.org](http://www.uhcanohio.org) for more information.

**Check out UHCAN Ohio's web site:  
[www.uhcanohio.org](http://www.uhcanohio.org)**

Resources, fact sheets, activist alerts, publications,  
calendar of events, links, legislative updates

**Do you know the names of  
your state legislators?**

Get names and contact info at: [www.legislature.state.oh.us/](http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/)

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### Moving toward universal health care

Groups working for universal health care, including UHCAN Ohio, are participating in *Cover The Uninsured Week* in March. We believe in the stated goal: “to establish the issues of the uninsured as a top national priority and to encourage our nation to seek solutions for the more than 41 million Americans who have no health insurance.”

But, how will we achieve a meaningful solution? Seasoned advocates in Illinois, led by the 300-organization Campaign for Better Health Care, realize they cannot win passage of a bill that mandates a new system up front. Instead, they are promoting a two-step strategy: a “process bill.” Step one: the state legislature plans and funds a public process to develop proposals on achieving universal health care and an independent analysis of proposals. Step Two: A public process would consider the best solution. This two-step approach gives the Campaign time to build the broad political support needed to win. To learn more about this please go to [www.uhcan.org](http://www.uhcan.org). Under “What's New,” click “Illinois Process Bill.”

During Cover the Uninsured Week, advocates will also be reminding lawmakers that we cannot afford to make matters worse by cutting back on Medicaid eligibility. **Ohio's proposed removal of up to 50,000 low income working parents must be stopped**, as we focus on solutions for the uninsured. Coalitions are forming around the state to support parents' coverage and, we hope, to continue working together toward health care for all.

- Cathy Levine

### Are you a parent on Medicaid or do you know someone who is?

If you are a parent on Medicaid and you are willing to tell the press and legislators about how it has helped you stay healthy, we'd like to talk to you. We want to make sure the public hears how important the coverage is to your health, your family, and your ability to work. Please call or send a note to UHCAN Ohio (contact info below), or e-mail [kimdill@uhcanohio.org](mailto:kimdill@uhcanohio.org). No information will be shared without your permission. *Note: Parents whose income is low enough to be eligible under the “old” rules (before July 1, 2000) will not lose Medicaid. Parents with earnings may be eligible for Transitional Medicaid for up to a year.*

# UPDATE

**Update** is a quarterly publication of the Universal Health Care Network of Ohio (UHCAN Ohio).

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# Mobilizing for Cover the Uninsured Week, March 10-16

In a major effort to establish the crisis of the uninsured as a national priority, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, national partners, and local funders are co-sponsoring *Cover the Uninsured Week*, March 10-16, 2003. In scores of local communities, coalitions will hold events to drive home several points:

1. 41 million in the US are uninsured, with 8 of 10 in working families.
2. Being uninsured has serious health and financial consequences.
3. Influential groups representing di-

verse constituencies are coming together to find solutions.

Cities across Ohio have marshaled significant resources to host events.

UHCAN Ohio is encouraging its partners to turn out for the town meetings and other events, in order to demonstrate our support for a *meaningful* solution to the crisis of the uninsured.

The week will lead off on Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, with town hall meetings (see the calendar below for more information about CTUW events).

Cleveland, Columbus, Youngstown, Cincinnati, Dayton, and other cities have marshaled significant resources to host events. UHCAN Ohio has documented the stories of uninsured Ohioans, who will tell their stories, locally and nationally, during the week. For info on local events:

<http://www.thestrategynetwork.com/ctuw.html>.

For info on national events:

[www.covertheuninsuredweek.org](http://www.covertheuninsuredweek.org)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Cover the Uninsured Week events around Ohio

#### Monday March 10

**Cleveland:** 9-10 a.m. Town Meeting, Free Clinic, 12208 Euclid.

**Columbus:** Noon-1:30 p.m. Town Meeting at Riffe Center, 77 S.High

**Cincinnati:** Kickoff at City Hall

**Youngstown area:** Noon-2 p.m. Town Meeting, 100 DeBartolo Place, Boardman, OH

#### Tuesday March 11

**Cleveland:** Campus forum at Tri-C

**Columbus:** 5-7 p.m. Campus Day, 160 Meiling Hall

**Cincinnati:** Campus Day

#### Wednesday March 12

**Cleveland:** Noon-1:30 p.m. Business/Labor forum, City Club

**Columbus:** Noon-1:30 p.m. Business/Labor forum luncheon at the Athletic Club, 136 E. Broad St.

**Columbus:** 8:30- 4, Health Fairs at Clinics/ Hospitals

**Cincinnati:** Health Fairs

**Youngstown:** 1-6 p.m. Health Fair, 3660 Shirley Rd.

#### Thursday March 13

**Cleveland:** "Central Fair" with focus on eligibility/enrollment sponsored by clinics, hospitals

**Cincinnati:** Business/ Labor Roundtable

**Youngstown area:** 8-10 a.m. Business/Labor Roundtable, Youngstown State Univ., DeBartolo Club. Invitation only.

**Youngstown area:** 7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Interfaith Breakfast, the Metroplex, Belmont Ave. Invitation only.

#### Friday March 14

**Cleveland:** 8:30-10:30 a.m. Interfaith Breakfast, Rappe Room, Catholic Center, downtown

**Columbus:** 7:30 - 9 a.m. Interfaith Breakfast, Broad Street Presbyterian Church, 760 East Broad Street

**Cincinnati:** Interfaith Breakfast

#### For more info, contact:

**Cleveland/ Columbus events:** <http://www.thestrategynetwork.com/ctuw.html>.

**Cincinnati events:** Trey Daly, 513-362-2814, [tdaly@lascinti.org](mailto:tdaly@lascinti.org)

**Youngstown events:** call 330-747-3440

**National events:** see [www.covertheuninsuredweek.org](http://www.covertheuninsuredweek.org).

#### April 9:

#### Have A Heart Ohio rally against state budget cuts

Columbus. Save the date - time/location TBA. For more information: 614-253-4340 or [www.uhcanohio.org](http://www.uhcanohio.org)

## UHCAN Ohio Receives Award from LEON

At its first annual Recognition Dinner, the Columbus-based Latino Empowerment and Outreach Network (LEON) presented an award to UHCAN Ohio for its advocacy on behalf of limited English speaking patients in health care.

Accepting the award for UHCAN Ohio, Executive Director Cathy Levine said, "We thank LEON for the recognition; we value our partnership with LEON and look forward to continuing to work together for health care justice." LEON works to empower and enrich the Latino community.

**UHCAN Ohio** is a member of **Community Shares of Mid-Ohio & Cleveland Community Shares**. Look for us in your workplace giving campaign if you choose to make a payroll deduction.

**Yes! I want to support UHCAN Ohio!**

I would like to make a donation (circle amount):  
 \$250 \$100 \$50 \$35 Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a monthly pledge:  
 bill my credit card for \$\_\_\_\_\_ each month

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_

**State/ Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment:**

My check is enclosed.       Bill my credit card:

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: UHCAN Ohio, 2800 Euclid Ave. #520, Cleveland, OH 44115. Credit card donations can be made by phone:(614) 253-4340 or (216) 241-8422.

**Update: Prescription Drug Fair Pricing Act**

*By John Gallo, Coalition for Affordable Prescription Drugs*

The fight for the Prescription Drug Fair Pricing Act still rages. Election boards in 88 counties have validated 108,018 signatures out of 140,748 submitted (96,878 total are required). In 40 of the 44 counties required we now have the minimum number of signatures required.

Before we can get to the Legislature, we have to get past the drug cartel. Drug attorneys are spending big money, attacking election board numbers in at least 36 counties, by filing suit to throw out petitions.

Our coalition of more than 300 organizations is confident we will be able to get supplemental signatures, once the legal suits are over. It's not clear when they will end.

Our Coalition is ready with a legislative offensive, and we will build coalitions in major cities to obtain legislators' support.. We intend to win on this issue. The people will not be denied this time!

*To get involved: In Cleveland contact Cindy Maxey (216-241-8422; [cjmaxey@uhcanohio.org](mailto:cjmaxey@uhcanohio.org)); In Columbus contact Kim Dill (614-253-4340, [kimdill@uhcanohio.org](mailto:kimdill@uhcanohio.org)) ; or contact John Gallo (216-881-7200, [jgallo@statos.net](mailto:jgallo@statos.net)).*



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