

President Hansen on Historic Health Care Victory

“Yesterday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed health care reforms that will better serve all Americans. Thanks to the commitment of President Obama and Democratic Members of Congress, we now have reform legislation that has eluded our nation’s grasp for a century.

“This is an achievement that will rank among the highest in our national experience.

“For the countless hard-working families across the country suffering at the hands of our nation’s badly broken health care system, the passage of this bill represents an unprecedented leap forward in the struggle to ensure all Americans have access to affordable health care—and makes good on President Obama’s promise to lead our country through the difficult challenges facing the American people on this issue.

“With the passage of this bill comes an end to the worst of insurance company abuses. No longer will Americans have to fear being denied health insurance due to pre-existing conditions. There will be no more lifetime limits on the dollar value of benefits. No more will insurance companies be allowed to retroactively cancel insurance coverage when a policy holder becomes ill.

“Aside from reigning in insurance company greed, the bill also extends coverage to millions of Americans who would otherwise go without, reduces prescription drug costs for seniors, while encouraging employers to fulfill their obligation of providing benefits to their workers.

“UFCW members participated in the health care debate in nearly every congressional district across the country. They made calls and wrote letters, rallied and marched, visited district offices and traveled to Washington D.C., to meet with elected representatives. UFCW members won’t forget the representatives who voted “yes” on these reforms and stood with working people and families rather than the insurance company lobbyists.”

OP

Bill Works for Working Families, Starting Now



After over a year of work by UFCW members across the country, President Barack Obama signed health care reform into law today. UFCW International President Joe Hansen attended the signing ceremony, representing UFCW members from around the country. This critical victory for working families will change the face of American health care. Here are some of the positive changes we will see in the next six months:

- If you are refused health insurance because of a pre-existing condition, you can get coverage through a new government-run high-risk pool.
- Your children can stay on your insurance longer – until they are 26 years old.
- Senior citizens will get a \$250 rebate for prescription drugs – the first step to closing the “donut hole” in Medicare drug coverage.
- Small businesses get significant tax credits for providing health insurance to their employees. **OP**

One Final Step

While the health care reform bill passed by Congress is an important victory, we aren’t quite done yet. An important package of improvements to the bill has been passed by the House, but will still need to be passed by the Senate. The Senate will likely consider them this week, under a process that allows improvements to be made by a simple majority vote. Help us push the bill over the line. Call your Senators today, and ask them to support these critical fixes to make sure health care reform is done right. **OP**

UFCW Leads the Charge to Pass Comprehensive Immigration Reform



UFCW International President Joe Hansen calls on the White House and Congress to take action on immigration reform.

UFCW brothers and sisters joined 200,000 activists and people of faith from all over the country on Sunday for a march and rally on the National Mall to demand that the White House and Congress take action and pass comprehensive immigration reform this spring. UFCW International President Joe Hansen and Civil Rights and Community Action Director Esther Lopez both spoke about the urgent need to reform the broken immigration system that is prolonging the economic crisis and hurting working families.

Representative Luis Gutierrez of Illinois and Senator Bob Menendez of New Jersey also spoke, highlighting the nearly 11 million undocumented workers who are forced to lead hidden lives in America, even as they contribute to our economy and improve their communities. UFCW members have been at the forefront of the fight for immigration reform for years, and Sunday was no exception – dozens of UFCW activists from local union across the country turned out to show their support.



UFCW's sea of gold was publicly acknowledged by several speakers at Sunday's Reform Immigration for America rally.

Sunday's march was only the most recent action in UFCW's sustained effort to make comprehensive and responsible immigration reform a reality. On Friday, President Hansen signed a joint letter from labor leaders to Senators Chuck Schumer and Lindsay Graham, the leading voices on immigration reform in Washington, re-asserting labor's unified position and unflinching commitment to passing comprehensive immigration reform this spring.

In their letter, President Hansen and other labor leaders affirmed their eagerness to partner with Senators Schumer and Graham on crafting an immigration system that works for America, and reiterated labor's insistence that immigration reform be a component of a shared prosperity agenda that raises the standard of living and quality of life of all workers. They emphasized that immigration reform must fully protect U. S. workers, reduce the exploitation of immigrant workers, and reduce the employers' incentive to hire undocumented workers rather than U.S. workers. **OP**