

**GENERAL CONVENTION OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH 2009
ARCHIVES' RESEARCH REPORT**

RESOLUTION NO.: 2009-D048
TITLE: Adoption of a "Single Payer" Universal Health Care Program
PROPOSER: The Rev. Gary Commins
COMMITTEE: National and International Concerns

Directly Related: (attached)

2006-C032 On the Topic of Health Care for All Americans (Rejected)
2000-A079 Create an Association of Episcopal Health Care Groups and Individuals
1997-A059 Authorize a Theological Guide on the Church's Response to Health Care
1994-A057 Adopt Church Principles on Access to Health Care
1994-C038 Commend Health Care Reform Principles (Referred)
1991-A010 Advocate Legislation for Comprehensive Health Care
1991-A099 Call for a System of Universal Access to Health Care
1988-D108 Advocate for Appropriate Health Care for All Who Are Ill
1985-A088 Encourage National and Congregational Support of Community Health Services

Indirectly Related:

2003-A124 Reestablish a Standing Commission on Health

In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions of General Convention for the period 1976 through 2006, selecting "direct" resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. Committee members who are interested in obtaining copies of "indirectly related" resolutions, legislative history before 1976, or who require other research assistance should contact the Archives at 800-525-9329 before Convention or at Convention in the General Convention Secretariat.



Resolution Number: 2006-C032
Title: On the Topic of Health Care for All Americans
Legislative Action Taken: Rejected
Text of Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, That the 75th General Convention support efforts at state and national levels to achieve accessible, affordable, high quality, universal health care; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention commend those states working actively toward this goal; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention commend those dioceses and congregations working toward this goal; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention urge the Episcopal dioceses and congregations to join ecumenical and interfaith faith-based organizations working toward this goal; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention encourage national, diocesan, and parish healthy ministry task forces to work toward this goal; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention urge the Standing Commission on National Concerns to identify health care for all as a top priority; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention urge the Office of Government Relations of The Episcopal Church to inform dioceses of legislation in their states that will advance this goal; and be it further

Resolved, That the 75th General Convention urge the Health Subcommittee of the Standing Commission on National Concerns to coordinate with the Office of Government Relations to prepare a report to Executive Council at its February, 2007 meeting presenting its strategy and means to implement this resolution; and be it further

Resolved, That each diocese and the Government Relations Office report back to the 76th General Convention on their work toward achieving this goal. or engage in extraordinary rendition or who face discipline for exposing such illegal conduct.



Resolution Number: 2000-A079
Title: Create an Association of Episcopal Health Care Groups and Individuals
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted
Final Text:

Resolved, That the Executive Council direct the Office of the Bishop for the Armed Services, Healthcare and Prison Ministries to convene representatives of the Episcopal healthcare groups (including the Association of Episcopal Healthcare Chaplains and the National Episcopal Healthcare Ministries) and individuals representing various professions in healthcare and in healthcare policy (recognizing the need for advice on the financial challenges inherent in this area), as well as those engaged in the teaching of, and research on medical ethics and end-of-life issues; and be it further

Resolved, That this Office and group work in cooperation with the Office of Government Relations, as well as appropriate interfaith and ecumenical organizations to articulate and communicate to public policy makers and the public, the positions of the Episcopal Church with regard to healthcare policy. This will include: advocacy for a healthcare system in which all may be guaranteed decent and appropriate primary healthcare during their lives and as they approach death; keeping abreast of the rapidly changing healthcare market and developments in biomedical research as they affect health-related public policies; collecting, collating, and developing resources and teaching materials related to access to healthcare for the use of dioceses, congregations, and individuals; and be it further

Resolved, That this Office develop structures which will further useful cooperation and support among the institutions, organizations, and individuals engaged in healthcare; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of the Bishop for Armed Services, Healthcare and Prison Ministries report to the 74th General Convention the results of this action.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 218.



Resolution Number: 1997-A059
Title: Authorize a Theological Guide on the Church's Response to Health Care
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, That the 72nd General Convention of the Episcopal Church authorize the Standing Commission on Health, or other agency of the Executive Council, to produce a theological introduction and study guide on the changing role of the church in the new health care environment, prepared for congregations and those with questions and concerns in this area; and to seek the services of a consultant/educator for this project.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, 1997* (New York: General Convention, 1998), p. 608.



Resolution Number: 1994-A057
Title: Adopt Church Principles on Access to Health Care
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That this 71st General Convention of the Episcopal Church adopt the following four principles as the position of the Episcopal Church regarding health care:

That universal access to quality, cost effective, health care services be considered necessary for everyone in the population.

That "quality health care" be defined so as to include programs in preventive medicine, where wellness is the first priority.

That "quality health care" include interdisciplinary and interprofessional components to insure the care of the whole person--physiological, spiritual, psychological, social.

That "quality health care" include the balanced distribution of resources so that no region of the country is underserved.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, 1994* (New York: General Convention, 1995), p. 288.



Resolution Number: 1994-C038
Title: Commend Health Care Reform Principles
Legislative Action Taken: Referred to an Interim Body
Text of the Resolution:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the 71st General Convention commend the health care reform principles of the Decency Principles Project as a statement of the Church's concern for health care reform that benefits the most vulnerable persons in our midst; and be it further

Resolved, That this 71st General Convention commend these health care principles to Congress and the Clinton Administration as they consider health care reform.



Resolution Number: 1991-A010
Title: Advocate Legislation for Comprehensive Health Care
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That this 70th General Convention assert the right of all individuals to medically necessary health care, including long-term services;** and be it further
Resolved, **That the Episcopal Church be encouraged at all levels to advocate for legislation for comprehensive medical benefits to include diagnostic tests, primary and tertiary care for acute and chronic conditions, rehabilitation care, long-term care, mental health services, dental care and prescription drugs; special attention should be given to the needs of individuals with limited self-care capabilities;** and be it further
Resolved, **That the Washington Office of the Episcopal Church, the Public Policy Network, the Office of Social and Specialized Ministries, and other appropriate agencies at the Episcopal Church Center facilitate the implementation of this resolution at the federal level.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 764.



Resolution Number: 1991-A099
Title: Call for a System of Universal Access to Health Care
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That the 70th General Convention decries the inequitable health care delivery system of the United States of America and calls upon the President, the Congress, Governors and other leaders to devise a system of universal access for the people of our country.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Phoenix, 1991* (New York: General Convention, 1992), p. 610.



Resolution Number: 1988-D108
Title: Advocate for Appropriate Health Care for All Who Are Ill
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Submitted
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Deputies concurring, **That this 69th General Convention direct the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Council, in light of the strains upon the health care system exerted by the AIDS Epidemic, to direct the Washington D.C. office of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America to adopt a strategy to advocate for all persons suffering from illness by creating appropriate levels of cost-effective health care, for example, hospices and alternative health care facilities.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Detroit, 1988* (New York: General Convention, 1989), p. 693.



Resolution Number: 1985-A088
Title: Encourage National and Congregational Support of Community Health Services
Legislative Action Taken: Concurred As Amended
Final Text:

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, **That this 68th General Convention of the Episcopal Church invite its principal ecumenical and interfaith partners to join this Church in calling upon the President of the United States and the Congress to authorize and appoint a National Commission on the Reform of Health Care charged with making recommendations concerning ways in which health services in these United States may be more economically and efficiently made available in a fair and equitable manner to all Americans, addressing in the process the 1984 findings of the National Citizens Board of Inquiry Into Health in America; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this 68th General Convention recommend and affirm the support by local congregations of community preventive health programs, such as alcohol and drug counseling, school health classes, immunization programs, maternal-child education programs, environmental health programs, crisis centers, suicide prevention programs and poison control centers; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this 68th General Convention encourage development in local congregations of training programs for lay persons through which pastoral care can be extended and strengthened through lay visitation; and be it further**

Resolved, **That this 68th General Convention commend the many programs initiated by congregations in community outreach and services, and encourage expanded efforts by all congregations to identify their community resources and assist in raising financial and personnel support for such health services as food kitchens, shelters for the homeless, legal aid centers, mental health centers, neighborhood health clinics, homes for persons with physical and mental disabilities or both, home health care, hospice care for the dying and their families, and halfway houses.**

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Anaheim, 1985* (New York: General Convention, 1986), p. 206.

TOPIC/TITLE: Health Care: Adoption of a "Single Payer" Universal Health Care Program

PROPOSER: The Rev. Gary Commins

C&C PAGE:

BB PAGE:

1 Resolved, the House of _____ concurring, That the 76th Convention of the Episcopal
2 Church urge passage of federal legislation establishing a "single payer" universal health
3 care program which would provide health care coverage for all of the people of the
4 United States; and be it further

6 Resolved, That the Episcopal Church shall work with other people of good will to finally
7 and concretely realize the goal of universal health care coverage; and be it further

9 Resolved, That church members and the Office of Government Relations communicate
10 the position of the Episcopal Church on this issue to the President and Members of
11 Congress, and advocate passage of legislation consistent with this resolution.

EXPLANATION:

The Episcopal Church, along with several other denominations in the National Council of Churches,
previously called upon the Congress and the President to ensure universal access to health care for all
people in the United States by the end of 2006. That deadline has now passed, and the situation is worse
than ever. More than 47 million people in the U. S. are currently without health insurance, more than 75
million went without for some length of time within the last two years, and millions more have inadequate
coverage or are at risk of losing coverage. People of color, immigrants and women are denied care at
disproportionate rates, while the elderly and many others must choose between necessities and life
sustaining drugs and care. Unorganized workers have either no or inadequate coverage. The Institute of
Medicine has found that each year more than 18,000 in the U. S. die because they had no health
insurance. While we in the United States spend more than twice as much of our gross domestic product as
other developed nations on health care (\$7,129 per capita), we remain the only industrialized country
without universal coverage, and the United States performs poorly in comparison on major health
indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality and immunization rates. Almost one-third (31 percent)
of the money spent on health care in the United States goes to administrative costs. Single-payer financing
is the best way to recapture this wasted money. The potential savings on paperwork, more than \$350 billion

Endorser(s): Ms. Patricia Abrams, The Rev. William E. Exner

Sponsor(s): Leanne Watkins Heidi Franz-Dale Neysa Ellgren

per year, are enough to provide comprehensive coverage to everyone without paying any more than we already do. Under a single-payer system, all Americans would be covered for all medically necessary services, including: doctor, hospital, long-term care, mental health, dental, vision, prescription drug and medical supply costs. Patients would regain free choice of doctor and hospital, and doctors would regain autonomy over patient care. Physicians would be paid fee-for-service according to a negotiated formulary or receive salary from a hospital or nonprofit HMO / group practice. Hospitals would receive a global budget for operating expenses. Health facilities and expensive equipment purchases would be managed by regional health planning boards. A single-payer system would be financed by eliminating private insurers and recapturing their administrative waste. Modest new taxes would replace premiums and out-of-pocket payments currently paid by individuals and business. Costs would be controlled through negotiated fees, global budgeting and bulk purchasing.

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