



NJ HORIZON WATCH COALITION

Working for Quality and Affordable Health Care for All

Partner Organizations

AARP NJ
Alliance for Disabled in
Action, Inc
Alliance for the Betterment
of Citizens with
Disabilities
Bergen County Central
Trades and Labor
Council, AFL-CIO
Bergen Peace and Justice
Coalition
BlueWave NJ
Community Catalyst
Consumers Union
Council of NJ State
College Locals AFT
CWA District 1
CWA Local 1032
Elder Rights Alliance
Gray Panthers of South
Jersey
Health Care for All--NJ
Health Professionals and
Allied Employees, AFT,
AFL-CIO
National Association of
Social Workers, NJ
Chapter
NEXT STEP
NJ Appleseed Public
Interest Law Center
NJ Citizen Action
NJ Citizen Action
Education Fund
NJ FamilyVoices
NJ Lutheran Office of
Governmental Ministries
NJ PIRG
NJ Policy Perspective
NJ Primary Care
Association
NJ Public Health Institute
South Jersey NOW - Alice
Paul Chapter
Statewide Parent
Advocacy Network of NJ

Tuesday, January 5, 2010

The Honorable Richard Codey
449 Mount Pleasant Avenue
West Orange, NJ 07052

Re: Request to Post S-2532 Concerning the Conversion of Horizon

Dear Senator Codey,

We are writing to request that you post S-2532 for a full Senate vote during the current legislative (lame duck) session. This bill, introduced by Senator Loretta Weinberg in the Senate, and passed by the NJ Assembly, clarifies existing state law that governs the proposed conversion of Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield, a non-profit health service corporation, to a for-profit company. Horizon is the only remaining non-profit health insurance company in New Jersey and our largest insurer. S-2532 has passed in the Senate Commerce Committee and requires a full Senate vote. We urge you to post the bill during one of the last remaining Senate voting sessions on Thursday, January 7, 2010 or Monday, January 11, 2010.

This important legislation would require the NJ Department of Banking and Insurance (DOBI), undertake a health impact study as part of and prior to its determination that the proposed conversion is or is not in the public interest. This critical health impact analysis is necessary to protect New Jersey consumers in a time of changing national health care policy, to determine if the proposal will or will not improve the health status of New Jerseyans, particularly vulnerable populations.

The proposed law also ensures transparency, accountability, and adequate public participation in the conversion process. The conversion law requires that the cost of the state's analysis be borne by Horizon, not New Jersey's taxpayers.

As Horizon's application is pending, the need to move this legislation now, in the lame duck session, is of utmost importance. Without the process and procedures outlined in S-2532 in place, New Jersey may not be able to make a complete assessment of the conversion's impact nor fully protect consumers and our entire state's health interests.

Thank you for your anticipated support.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Salowe-Kaye

Phyllis Salowe-Kaye
Executive Director
New Jersey Citizen Action

Renee Steinhagen

Renee Steinhagen
Executive Director
NJ Appleseed Public Interest Law Center

Reverend Bruce

Davidson

Reverend Bruce Davidson
Director
Lutheran Office of Governmental
Ministry of NJ

Joe Fleming

Joe Fleming
Director
PICO New Jersey

Laurie Sobel

Laurie Sobel
Senior Staff Attorney
Consumers Union

Mary Forsberg

Mary Forsberg
Interim President
New Jersey Policy Perspective

Hetty Rosenstein

Hetty Rosenstein
New Jersey Director
Communication Workers of America
District One

Patrick

Kavanagh

Patrick Kavanagh
President
Communication Workers of America
Local 1032

Ken McNamara

Ken McNamara
President
Communication Workers of America
Local 1037

David Weiner

David Weiner
President
Communication Workers of America
Local 1081

Marilyn Askin

Marilyn Askin
Chief Legislative Advocate
AARP NJ

Walter X

Kalman

Walter X Kalman, MSW, LSW
Executive Director
National Association of Social
Workers New Jersey Chapter

Marcia Marley

Marcia Marley
President
BlueWaveNJ

Rebecca Alper

Rebecca Alper
Program Associate
NJ Public Interest Research Group

Ethan B.

Liz Cohen

Ellis

Ethan B. Ellis
President
Next Step *and*
Alliance for Disabled in Action, Inc.

Diana Autin

Diana Autin
Executive Co-Director
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network

Martin Cramer

Martin Cramer
Co-Facilitator
NJ Elder Rights Alliance

Adrienne Eaton Eric Scherzer

Adrienne Eaton
President
Rutgers AAUP-AFT

Nicholas C. Yovnello

Nicholas C. Yovnello
President
Council on New Jersey State College
Locals, AFT

Matt Shapiro

Matt Shapiro
President
New Jersey Tenants Organization

Liz Cohen
Regional Social Action Co-Chair
Union for Reform Judaism –
West Hudson Valley Council

Lauren Agoratus

Lauren Agoratus
NJ Coordinator
Family Voices NJ

Lorraine Petrie

Lorraine Petrie
Co-President
South Jersey NOW – Alice Paul Chapter

Eric Scherzer
Executive Director
Committee of Interns & Residents/SEIU

James Harris

James Harris
President
NJ Chapter of the NAACP

Jeanne Oterson

Jeanne Oterson
Public Policy Director

Sherryl Gordon

Sherryl Gordon
Executive Director
AFSCME New Jersey Council 1

Health Professionals and Allied Employees

Vera McCants

Vera McCants
President
INCCA Community Development Corp

Damaris Wicks

Damaris Wicks
Cathedral CDC Social Services

Drew Harris

Drew Harris
NJ Public Health Institute

Vic De Luca

Vic De Luca
Mayor, Maplewood, New Jersey

CC: Horizon Watch Coalition Members
Senator Loretta Weinberg
Senator Sandra Cunningham
Senator Robert Gordon
Senator Shirley Turner
Senator Nia Gill
Senator Stephen Sweeney
Senator Jeff Van Drew