

August 2013

David Ball spoke to a legislative aide in the Washington office and met in Mount Pleasant with a representative from Congressman Sanford’s office, after learning how to speak Republican from Vermont PNHP organizer Deb Richter, MD. She says that when speaking to fiscal conservatives it is important to stress that health care cost will not be under control until there is a business plan with global budgets. HFA – SC next plans to contact the Washington aide in Sanford’s office who is responsible for health care policy.

Richter claims that upwards of 85% of health care costs are fixed which means denying access will not reduce costs. Stress to Republicans that we have the same goal - a fiscally sustainable health care system. She also advised that we focus on building relationships over rallies since those in power are more likely to affect change based on respect and familiarity than on being confronted.

 



**INSIDE** – Plans are already underway for our next event tentatively scheduled for Tuesday evening, October 8th, in Florence. Diane Shrader has been hard at work outlining the event. She is in contact with the new Hotel Florence which will waive the meeting room charge. In addition to working closely with Dustin Calliari on database questions in order to get a strong email and snail-mail invitation to the event, Diane has also been in touch with Emily Henkels, the new National Organizer at PNHP, to plan strategy.

Diane organized a conference call with Healthcare for All – SC, national PNHP, and Shantha Alonso (Field Organizing Manager for NETWORK), in an effort to get Sister Simone Campbell, a nationally recognized social justice speaker, to attend the event. It looks like the schedule will not permit this, but Diane and Shantha will look into alternatives (Skype, letter of support, etc.) in lieu of an in-person address.

**OUTSIDE** – HFA – SC submitted the first workshop proposal for the upcoming Healthcare – NOW! Leadership conference planned for October 5-6 in Nashville, TN. The proposal calls for a joint PNHP and Public Citizen workshop to draft state Single Payer legislation. The attorney from Public Citizen will send a questionnaire to participants so they can find answers to how their state handles ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act), Workman’s Compensation, and other issues that vary from state to state. At the conference participants will modify a model legislative template to conform to their state needs.

Chapter President David Keely has been in contact with representatives of the South Carolina Hospital Association (SCHA) in an effort to further collaborate on “new” Medicaid expansion advocacy with an eye towards our state legislature resuming debate in January 2014. A meeting of SCHA’s leadership and advocacy team with HFA – SC leaders is planned in the next few weeks.

David Ball was a repeat guest on TheMackShow. The Saturday afternoon radio program is hosted by State House Representative David Mack, who represents the Charleston area. Mack called and asked HFA – SC to respond to a lead story in The Post and Courier that suggested that individual healthcare premiums under the Affordable Care Act were likely to increase from 50-70%. David was introduced as an “expert” in health care financing.

HFA – SC is working to deepen our relationship with organized labor and local community active groups. Ball has joined the League of Women Voters (LWV) and has been attending Progressive Network meetings in Charleston. We are in regular contact with Erin McKee, SC President of the AFL-CIO, and we recently tapped Rob Groce to help us with media issues. He is also designing a display banner for HFA – SC.

Bobbie Rose, a former Democratic candidate for the US Senate, has agreed to spearhead our effort to introduce Single Payer legislation in South Carolina. We hope to have model legislation drafted the first week of October at the Healthcare – NOW! Conference. State Representative David Mack has agreed to author the bill in the House. A state Senator to offer the bill has not yet been identified.

**REGIONAL AMBASSADORS** – Midlands Ambassador Emilio Perez-Jorge plans to meet with the South Carolina Hospital Association in September. Both Dr. Perez and the SCHA are located in Columbia. Low Country Ambassador Marta Hampton is working with Emily Henkels from national PNHP to process requests for information from our highly successful Medicare birthday party held on July 30th.