

HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA NOW!

Media Contact:

Jacki Schechner

Communications Director

Health Care for America Now

202-454-6196 direct

202-510-0605 cell

jschechner@healthcareforamericanow.org

www.healthcareforamericanow.org

Washington, DC - July 8, 2008 – Today in Washington, DC and 52 cities across the country, including 37 state capitals, a new national campaign is bringing together millions of Americans to demand quality, affordable health care for all. **Health Care for America Now** (HCAN) is being launched by 100 national and local groups that represent labor, community organizations, doctors, nurses, women, small businesses, faith-based organizations, people of color, netroots activists, and think tanks. **Health Care for America Now** is organizing to assure that the first order of business of the next President and Congress is to pass legislation in 2009 that guarantees quality, affordable health care for all.

Health Care for America Now is an unprecedented coalition led by co-chair organizations AFSCME, SEIU, and USAction and steering committee members ACORN, Americans United for Change, Campaign for America's Future, Center for American Progress Action Fund, Center for Community Change, MoveOn, National Education Association, National Women's Law Center, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and United Food and Commercial Workers.

"The heart and soul of our campaign lies outside the Beltway where millions of Americans are mobilizing at work, at home, in their neighborhoods, and online to win quality, affordable health care we all can count on," says Richard Kirsch, National Campaign Manager for **Health Care for America Now**.

Starting today, the campaign is spending an initial \$1.5 million on national television, print, and online advertising and is sending out an email blast to more than 5 million people. Over the next five months, **Health Care for America Now** plans to spend \$25 million in paid media, have 100 organizers in 45 states, and will be asking Members of Congress, "Which side are you on?"

"HCAN will mobilize millions of Americans to demand that the first order of business of the next President and Congress is to enact quality, affordable health care for all in 2009," said Kirsch. "We will be asking Members of Congress this year to tell us if they are on our side or the side of the health insurance industry."

Health Care for America Now offers a bold new vision for health care reform: Americans can keep the private insurance they have, join a new private insurance plan, or choose a public health insurance plan. The campaign also calls for a government role in setting and enforcing rules on the insurance industry which consistently charges whatever it wants, sets high deductibles, denies coverage based on pre-existing conditions, and drops coverage when people get sick.

1825 K Street, NW • Suite 400 • Washington, DC 20006 • (p) 202.955.5665 • (f) 202.955.5606
www.healthcareforamericanow.org

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“It is time the insurance industry started putting our health before its profits,” says Kirsch. “We need an American solution to health care that offers quality, affordability, and choice. We need a solution that works for our families and our businesses, and now is the time to make sure the next President and Congress deliver on the promise of quality, affordable health care for all in 2009.”

Health Care for America Now started with a financial commitment of at least \$500,000 from each of the 13 steering committee members and a \$10 million grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies.

“Regardless of health status, income, race, age or any other factor, every person deserves quality, affordable health care,” said Gara LaMarche, President and CEO of The Atlantic Philanthropies. “We support **Health Care for America Now** and its effort to make sure the next President and Congress deliver on the promise of quality, affordable health care for all in 2009.”

The national launch at the National Press Club in Washington, DC at 12pm EST on Tuesday July 8th features the following speakers: **Richard Kirsch** (Health Care for America Now), **Maude Hurd** (ACORN), **Gerald McEntee** (AFSCME), **Caren Benjamin** (Americans United for Change), **Roger Hickey** (CAF), **Elizabeth Edwards** (CAP Action Fund), **Eli Pariser** (MoveOn), **Reg Weaver** (NEA), **Marcia Greenberger** (National Women’s Law Center), **Cecile Richards** (Planned Parenthood), **Anna Burger** (SEIU), **Joseph Hansen** (UFCW), **Jeff Blum** (USAction), **David T. Tayloe, Jr., MD FAAP** (American Academy of Pediatrics), and **David White** (mechanic shop owner).

Health Care for America Now (“HCAN”), a section 501(c)(4) issue advocacy organization, is a broad coalition of nonprofit and political organizations that are working to promote quality, affordable health care for all Americans. HCAN and each of its members conducts and funds only activities appropriate to its tax and election law status.