

## Chaffee County Democrats Health Care Position Document

### *Do you know?*

In Chaffee County, one-quarter to one-third of people are uninsured.

45 million Americans are uninsured- that's almost 1 in 6 people.

18,000 people die each year due to lack of health insurance. The USA ranks 18th out of 30 countries in overall life expectancy and 26<sup>th</sup> best (or fifth worst) in infant mortality.

We do, however, finish first in one category, namely, the percentage of the population that is obese. (*The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, health data, released June '05*)

60% of health care spending already comes from taxes, if you include Medicare, Medicaid, other indigent care programs and insurance for federal employees.

(*Woolhandler S, Himmelstein DU. Paying for national health insurance and not getting it. (2002) Health Affairs 21(4):88-99.*)

Most countries' universal coverage systems retain choice and yet save "administrative money".

Medicare spends about 2-3% of every dollar on health care administration, while most HMO's spend around 15%--some even as high as 30%. That's 30 cents of every dollar not going toward health care.

### *We Believe...*

**Health care for all Americans is essential and achievable.**

**The current health care disparity crisis is a national problem with huge local impact**

a healthy Chaffee County benefits us all and strengthens our economy. Illness becomes more serious and more expensive when early treatment is not available due to lack of insurance. This can result in lack of early treatment. The entire community suffers a loss of productivity when workers are sick.

**Reform is needed to save choice and save money** - economic conditions in Colorado have forced the state to make drastic budget cuts to youth services and children's healthcare. Even without reform to increase Medicaid's limited eligibility and Medicare reimbursement, even more Coloradoans may face ineligibility for Medicaid resulting from massive cuts in Medicaid funds. This will make health care less accessible to many and more expensive for us all.

### ***Get involved!***

Educate your friends and family about universal insurance coverage.

Join local and national organizations like Healthcare Now and Physicians for a National Health program.

Write and call your elected officials to support single-payer health coverage – the National Health Insurance Act, HR676, sponsored by John Conyers.

Support the Colorado Economic Recovery Act (Referendum C & D) on the November ballot. You may want to say why this is important for health coverage.