



My name is Vanessa Crilly and I am the Director of Jobs with Justice-LI. We are a local coalition of labor, faith and community organizations committed to fighting for the rights of working men and women. Jobs with Justice engages workers and allies in campaigns to win justice in workplaces and in communities, and we believe in long-term, grassroots organizing and strategic action as the foundation for building a viable movement. By engaging a broad community of allies, we can win bigger victories and reach working people through the organizations that represent them—unions, congregations, community organizations—and directly as Jobs with Justice activists.

I'd like to thank the State and Governor Spitzer for organizing these hearings in order to find out how New York can uniquely ensure access to affordable, quality health care for all. Jobs with Justice-LI is especially excited to hear today's news of the Governor's partnership with the Insurance Department, who have awarded a contract to the Urban Institute to assist the state in developing a strategic roadmap for achieving universal health insurance.

Health care is one our of primary issues of Jobs with Justice-LI. We support a plan for plan for secure, high-quality health care for all that builds on our the current strength of American health care, while controlling costs to working people. This year our organization voted to support HR 676, also known as the Conyers Bill. This bill, which is currently endorsed by over 300 union and labor groups, reflects our belief that only a single-payer system would assure that everyone is covered with one high standard of benefits and care, decrease administrative costs, and put an end to the curb the corporate greed of the insurance companies. We are pursuing actions to persuade all Long Island representatives in Congress to sign on to HR 676 because it is the strongest resolution on the table.

Jobs with Justice-Long Island is strongly opposed to President Bush's drastic budget cuts to Medicare, Medicaid and State Child Health Insurance Program. It will cost jobs, including those on Long Island and in the rest of the state of New York, and will only produce more uninsured children. Our children have a right to quality health care and anybody, including the President, opposed to it needs to be re-informed. Our country will not take less than everything when it comes to insurance for all its' children.

Our State needs additional measures to expand eligibility under the [Child Health Plus](#) program. This program is essential to our working families. Until a single-payer health care system is enacted, Child Health Plus is one way to provide physical exams, immunizations, emergency care and prescription and non-prescription drugs. There are many working families who are losing out because they are not eligible for this plan under the current guidelines. We need to expand it and Jobs with Justice-LI supports Governor Spitzer's plan to insure 400,000 more children through Medicaid and Child Health Plus.

We also support the state takeover of the county share for Medicaid funding and a long term care department in the Department of Health. We agree that The State is far better able to finance the

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Medicaid program than are the counties because of its broader and more equitable tax base, which draws on the income wealth of the entire State. In contrast, local governments rely heavily

on property tax and sales tax. Moreover, the State is equipped to enact cost containment measures such as streamlining administrative functions, managing client access, and coordinating Medicaid with other State programs.” (<http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/?bn=A05816>)

My colleagues speaking today will likely call on the need to fix America’s broken health care system. We all know that medical costs are rising rapidly, and that many families right here in New York are forced to make “Sophie’s” choices, trying to choose between the rent and health care, child care and health care. It isn’t fair and it isn’t right. We know we have to do better and we know we can do better. Today, as we conclude the last of these public hearing, I ask the State to take a good hard look at honest, smart health care reform and how to make it a reality for all New Yorkers.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.