

# INTERFAITH STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES:

## Protecting Medicaid and Medicare

Our organizations, as well as people of faith throughout our society, strongly support Medicaid and Medicare. In the faith community, we are often the first to witness need and distress from all causes. As providers of services and care, both physical and spiritual, our members, congregations and institutions, including religiously affiliated health care providers, are very familiar with the importance of Medicaid and Medicare. We fully recognize that:

- Medicaid is the only program that provides comprehensive health coverage to low-income women, men, and children, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Medicaid's reach into every aspect of health care at every stage of life is remarkable, from the program's role in paying for nearly 40% of all live births to its role in funding the long-term care of seven out of 10 nursing home residents.
- Medicare is the primary source of health insurance for our nation's seniors. Coupled with Medicaid for seniors with low incomes, Medicare ensures that our seniors receive the health care they need.

In deliberations about how we address the competing priorities and needs of all those who live in the United States, we call upon our elected leaders to consider the following shared interfaith principles which inform our support for Medicaid and Medicare:

- As people of faith, we envision a society where each person is afforded health, wholeness and human dignity.
- All individuals, regardless of their age, income, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, geography, employment status, or health status, deserve equal access to quality, affordable, inclusive and accountable health care. Reducing health care options for some based on any of these factors is profoundly unjust.
- The social safety net and its key components, including health care, must be maintained to reflect our shared commitment to protecting vulnerable populations.
- Concern for the most vulnerable in our community, particularly low-income women, men and children and people with disabilities, is at the heart of our sacred texts and an affirmation of our common humanity.
- Caring for our elders and treating them with dignity demonstrates the value we place on our enduring responsibility to enable all persons to live out the fullness of their days.

Together, Medicaid and Medicare address these principles and help fulfill our moral obligation to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of our society. Inasmuch as the above principles guide our organizations and the millions of people of faith we represent in our support for Medicaid and Medicare, we urge our elected leaders to consider these principles in their discussions about the future of these life-saving programs.

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**For more information:**

**Washington Interfaith Staff Community (WISC) Health Care Working Group**  
Rev. Cynthia Abrams, Convenor

**Faithful Reform in Health Care**  
Rev. Linda Hanna Walling, Executive Director

# Interfaith Statement of Principles: Protecting Medicaid and Medicare

*(national and state/regional signatories as of August 5, 2011)*

## National Groups

Aleph Institute	National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
American Muslim Health Professionals	National Council of Jewish Women
Buddhist Peace Fellowship	NETWORK, A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby
Church of the Brethren	Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Public Witness
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)	Progressive National Baptist Convention
Disciples Justice Action Network	Rabbinical Assembly
The Episcopal Church	RESULTS Faith in Action
National Episcopal Health Ministries	Sisters of Charity, BVM Leadership Team
Faithful Reform in Health Care	Sisters of Mercy Institute Justice Team
Friends Committee on National Legislation	Union for Reform Judaism
Global Justice Institute	United Church of Christ
Islamic Society of North America	United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society
Jewish Reconstructionist Federation	
Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office	
Metropolitan Community Churches	

## State / Regional Groups

Alabama Faith Council Health Care Task Force	Michigan Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Network
Arizona Ecumenical Council	Mississippi Human Services Coalition
Arkansas Interfaith Alliance	Missouri Health Care for All
Bernardine Franciscan Sisters, Pennsylvania	Missouri Jobs with Justice
California Council of Churches	New York State Council of Churches
Church Women United in Maryland	North Carolina Council of Churches
Colorado Council of Churches	North Carolina Fair Share
Consumer Health Coalition, Pennsylvania	Northern Plains Conference, United Church of Christ
Delaware Ecumenical Council on Children and Families	Ohio Council of Churches
Dorothy Reuff Chaplaincy Care Program, Illinois	Pennsylvania Council of Churches
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon	Sisters of Humility, Iowa
Executive Committee of the Central Maryland Ecumenical Council	Texas Impact
Faith Action Network, Washington State	Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of New Jersey
Illinois Campaign for Better Health Care Faith Caucus	Virginia Interfaith Center
Interfaith Health and Hope Coalition, Michigan	West Virginia Council of Churches
Interfaith Impact of New York State	Western North Carolina Conference Chapter of the Methodist Federation for Social Action
Interfaith Worker Justice - New Mexico	Wisconsin Council of Churches
Maryland Ecumenical Leaders Group	