



the ANTI-HUNGER ADVOCATE

Brought to you by the Anti-Hunger Action Committee

April 2008

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO HAS HAD A MEDICAL BILL SENT TO A COLLECTION AGENCY?

AHAC members and friends have recently begun to interview food pantry clients to learn more about how rising healthcare costs impact low income Utahns. Now that we have finished a couple hundred of these surveys we have noticed that most people we talk to have had a healthcare bill sent to a collection agency.

Having a bill sent to a collection agency can ruin your credit and make it harder to obtain healthcare in the future. In other states there are laws limiting when a hospital can send a bill to a collection agency. In some states hospitals are required to give patients a chance to set up a payment plan and the hospitals cannot require people to pay more than ten percent of their monthly income at a time.

Do you think that Utah should have a law like that? If so, do you care about this issue enough to talk to state legislators or reporters from the media about it? Do you know someone who has been impacted by this problem personally who would be willing to share his or her story so that other people do not have to go through the same thing in the future?

If you think this is a real problem then please let us know!



The Anti-Hunger Advocate is a monthly newsletter of the Anti-Hunger Action Committee.

Our Mission: The Anti-Hunger Action Committee is a membership organization for food pantry clients and their friends that organizes low income people to take action on poverty issues, educates low income people about available resources and provides opportunities to become more involved in the community.

Submissions: To submit an item to the newsletter, contact us at: bill@crossroads-u-c.org or 364-7765.

To join AHAC fill out the pledge card stapled to paper editions of this newsletter

AHAC ELECTS NEW BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

On March 18 AHAC held its annual meeting where leaders for the coming year were elected. Don Reifsnider and Lou Anne Stevenson were elected Co-Chairs of the AHAC Board of Directors. Margo Westley was elected Board Secretary and David Hughes was elected Board Treasurer.

Other people elected to the Board of Directors were: Darla Ball, Laine Gardinier, David Hughes, Dennis Keating, Faina Raik, Rudy Roca, Jackie Sanchez and Tia Thulin.

AHAC is very lucky to have such a dedicated group of leaders for the coming year.



At AHAC's Annual Meeting Darla Ball and Laine Gardinier stepped down as Board Co-Chairs. We are very grateful for their leadership over the past few years.

GET YOUR MONEY!

Congress recently passed an economic stimulus bill that makes many people eligible for a tax rebate, including some people who do not normally need to file taxes. To find out if you qualify call:

1-866-234-2942

AHAC HEALTHCARE ACTION STEP FOR APRIL

CONTACT GOVERNOR JON HUNTSMAN JR. AND REMIND HIM THAT IF A HEALTHCARE REFORM PLAN DOESN'T WORK FOR LOW INCOME UTAHNS THEN IT DOESN'T WORK AT ALL!

During the state legislative session that ended on March 5, 2008, a bill was passed creating a framework for a state healthcare reform plan and a task force to develop a plan for next session. We are worried that this plan will increase healthcare costs for many Utahns. Governor Huntsman has spoken in favor of healthcare reform and supported this bill. Now is the time to begin reminding him that 62 percent of the uninsured people in Utah are low income people. Please take a minute to write to Governor Huntsman and tell him that the top priority in healthcare reform needs to be making healthcare affordable for people who cannot afford it.

Write Governor Huntsman:

Governor John Huntsman, Jr.
State Capitol Complex
East Office Building
Suite E220
PO Box 142220
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-2220

To send an email go to the Governor's website:

http://governor.utah.gov/goca/form_governor.html