



the

Anti-Hunger Advocate

brought to you by the Anti-Hunger Action Committee

February 2009

Protest draws crowd, attention



On January 27, members of the Anti-Hunger Action Committee joined with other advocacy groups for an eye-catching protest on Capitol Hill.

Protestors wore surgeon masks and carried cardboard axes, chanting, "Don't axe Medicaid!" In a line of more than 50 people, they wound their way around the Capitol.



First stop was the office of the governor. Crowding into the lobby, the group presented a letter to a representative of the governor. The letter pledged support of the governor, should he choose to veto cuts to the health & human services budget. Protestors urged the governor to veto, saying that the federal economic stimulus package would provide funds for these very same programs—if the programs remained intact.

The letter said, "We know you are aware of the human costs that arise when low-income people lose access to basic, medically necessary healthcare. We know you have a competent, professional staff who are aware that Congress is voting on an economic stimulus bill this week that will give Utah the money necessary to keep

our state Medicaid program whole."

In what would prove to be impeccable timing, the protest occurred a day before the U.S. House of Representatives passed the federal economic stimulus bill and sent it on to the Senate. The word continued to spread as more and more Utah newspapers reported on the Medicaid aid this bill would bring.

At press time, the revised 2009 state budget did not eliminate many of the services we feared it would. We can celebrate that. However, the fight over the 2010 budget—which starts July 1, 2009—has not even begun yet. This could call for more action (see next planning meeting on page 2).

Thank you to everyone who helped bring this issue to the attention of lawmakers.

February healthcare action step

Ask Senator Hatch to vote "yes" on the economic stimulus package
Call, e-mail, or write federal Senator Orrin Hatch and ask him to vote "yes" on the economic stimulus package.

With this package, Utah's Medicaid program would receive an extra \$103.9 million this fiscal year, \$145.3 million next year and \$78.9 million in fiscal year 2011. We need that money!

Without the Medicaid aid, thousands of Utahns could get kicked off the program. Without the healthcare that Medicaid provides, many of

them would not survive. We depend on these funds.

At press time, the package passed the U.S. House of Representatives and was on its way to the Senate, where Senator Hatch will have a chance to vote on it. Act now! Encourage Senator Hatch to stand up for people who need healthcare.

If you have any questions, call Bill Tibbitts at Crossroads Urban Center, (801) 364-7765, ext. 131.

Senator Orrin Hatch
104 Hart Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

call: (801) 524-4380

fax: (801) 524-4379

e-mail Senator Hatch by going here:

<http://hatch.senate.gov/>
and then click on "contact info."

Looks fun?

If last month's protest looked fun and funky...

if you participated in your first action step and got hooked...

if you want to advocate for low-income people...

then come to our monthly AHAC meeting!

Tuesday, February 17
5:00 p.m.
Crossroads lobby
347 S 400 E



To continue what we started with last month's protest...

Let's not count our chickens before they're hatched. We don't know what the state budget will be for the rest of fiscal year 2009 (from now until July 1, 2009). At this point, we have reason to hope that Medicaid eligibility will be preserved, thanks to incoming money from the federal economic stimulus package. But there is no guarantee.

To continue our advocacy, we have

scheduled a planning meeting for our next action:

Tuesday, February 3 @ 3:00 p.m.

Disabled Rights Action Committee
headquarters

3565 South West Temple, suite 16

We will once again put our creative heads together and come up with an effective way to make our voices heard! Join us as we fight for justice!



AHAC birthday
this month

Don Reifsnider

February 5

Happy birthday!