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MI Health Care for America Now, MoveOn Protest Big Insurance

*“Big Insurance: Sick of It” Events Highlight Abuses of Insurance Industry,
Demonstrates Need for Public Health Insurance Option*

LANSING - As the health care reform debate rages on in Washington DC, Michigan citizens, along with MoveOn and state partners from Health Care for America Now Michigan rallied outside Blue Cross & Blue Shield today to call on CEO Daniel Loepp and other big insurance CEO's to pledge their support for health care reform.

“Michigan families are being priced out of health insurance. As health insurance premiums go up and prescriptions go uncovered we see more people having to choose between going to the doctor and putting food on the table,” said **Erin Knott of Michigan Citizen Action**. “It is time that insurance companies reform their policies, stop denying coverage, and start being part of the health care crisis cure”

Current profit-driven policies are driving up health care costs across the country. In fact, Blue Cross & Blue Shield policy holders recently saw a rate increase of up to 22%. Across the board, health insurance premiums, under big insurance like United Health Care, which is a member of the Michigan Association of Health Plans, have risen 12.9 times faster than median earnings.

“The current health insurance system makes us sick—as a country. As the stories shared here today show, if the health insurance industry, including Blue Cross & Blue Shield, wins the health care reform debate, we in Michigan lose,” said **Erin Fox a local MoveOn** member. “Health care reform with a strong public health insurance option will help lower skyrocketing health care costs and expand coverage to millions of Americans, but the health insurance industry opposes it because they are more concerned with protecting their sky-rocketing profits. It's time they got the message that we need real reform, now.”

“Under our current system, Americans, like my son Jon, are dealing with out-of-control costs for insurance. Private insurance costs are too high for those like Jon, whom, even though employed could not afford to pay the premiums, “said **Sue Owen Kinsey**, whose uninsured son died from a heart condition. “Jon was 35 years old; he lived just 1/2 of a normal life span. With his death I lost my only child who I loved more than life itself.”

The rally is part of a national “Big Insurance: Sick of It” day of action organized by MoveOn.org Political Action, Health Care for America Now, SEIU, Michigan Citizen Action, and other organizations, which includes events being held nationwide..