

Fact Sheet 2: Developing an Organizing Plan

Just Health Care is the Labor Party's campaign for national health insurance. By its very nature and purpose, this campaign puts us in direct conflict with the largest industry in the nation – the health care industry. As trade unionists, we have learned that we can only win concessions from powerful corporate interests when we have built our own power independent of the corporations.

We have also learned from our trade union experience that we will not build that power simply by relying on rational argument to convince people of good will of the rightness of our cause. If this were an effective way to organize, companies like Wal-Mart would be paying their employees a living wage! We also know that pulling back on our demands to please corporate interests is like going into negotiations already conceding the boss's program. The boss sees that as a sign of weakness and asks for more and more.

The Just Health Care campaign is about creating a movement that will make health care a right for all Americans. Building this movement is the only way to force elected officials and candidates to speak to our issues. Our job is not to convince the politicians to support Just Health Care. Our job is to educate and mobilize one million activists across this country who will settle for *nothing less* than Just Health Care.

The 2004 elections provide a powerful opportunity to advance the Just Health Care campaign. It is an opportunity to let the politicians know that a growing constituency for Just Health Care will hold them accountable for their actions (and inaction). And it is an opportunity to mobilize our members and our communities for real change.

Elections and candidates come and go. The important thing for our campaign is what we have in place the day after the elections. That is the yardstick to measure our success. Our organizing activities should make our movement stronger after the elections than it is today.

Organize To Win

As union activists, we organize all the time against corporate and entrenched power. Just like our union campaigns, we must:

- ★ Define our message
- ★ Identify our allies
- ★ Figure out the pressure points
- ★ Allocate our resources

We must take our goal of national health insurance and break it down into realizable projects and achievable goals that will build our power and inspire and energize our allies.

Committee of a Million

The Committee of a Million for Just Health Care has two main goals:

- ★ Educate the public about the need for national health insurance and why our plan is the best possible solution; and
- ★ Demonstrate broad public support for a national health insurance plan. This show of support is vital to convincing politicians and the media to put Just Health Care on the national agenda.

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The Committee of a Million is an opportunity to implement our one-on-one organizing approach. It is directly linked to our overall goal of building a powerful movement for Just Health Care that will continue beyond the next election cycle.

The Committee of a Million is not a “petition drive.” It is much more like getting people to sign authorization cards during a union organizing campaign. We want to use the request to sign as an opportunity to educate people about our campaign. We only want to sign up those who understand and support the campaign. And we want to identify potential organizers and leaders for future follow up.

Activities and Events

Just Health Care activities and events should be part of a long-term organizing plan and should answer these questions:

- ★ **WHO** are we trying to reach by the activity or event?
- ★ **WHAT** resources are available to ensure success?
- ★ **WHERE** will the activity or event lead our overall campaign (i.e., what will we be doing next)?
- ★ **WHEN** will the activity or event take place and is there adequate time to properly prepare and organize for it?
- ★ **WHY** is this activity or event important to the success of our overall campaign?

An effective organizing plan builds on success and learns from failure. To inspire our activists and build our credibility in the press and the community it is important to deliver on all of our promises. For example, if we boast to the press that 500 people will be at a public meeting and only 200 show up, it will be perceived as a failure. If we tell people that we are hoping for at least 100 attendees and the same 200 people show up, it will be seen as a big success. Again, our experience as union activists should be our guide: which is a stronger show of solidarity – getting 10% of the plant to march out for a militant rally at the plant gate or getting 80% of the plant to wear union stickers?

Additional Resources

In addition to the materials in your packet, our campaign website – **www.justhealthcare.org** – has a wealth of information about the health care crisis and the national health insurance solution. Download the Just Health Care financing plan and our training course, *Corporate Power and the American Dream: Just Health Care*. Join the Committee of a Million and sign up for email updates online (or fill out and return the postcard in your packet). To receive the *Party Builder* newsletter, let us know on the postcard. If you are not already a Labor Party member, use the sign up form in your packet to join today! You may also join online at **www.thelaborparty.org**.

Perhaps the most important resource of all is the collective wisdom and experience of a strong group of dedicated organizers. Remember: trust your instincts, stay flexible and keep your eye on the prize!



1. List any new Ideas for Organizing that you can come up with:

2. List what you can do in your union to organize for Just Health Care:

3. List what you can do in your community to organize for Just Health Care:

Worksheet 2: Sample Organizing Plan

1. List three to five realistic goals for the Just Health Care Campaign in your union and community between now and November 2004.

2. List 5 Activities that will support these goals.
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____

3. Pick One Activity: _____

4. WHO will be reached by that activity?

5. WHAT resources will be needed to carry out the activity?

6. WHERE will that activity lead the campaign?

- Just Health Care is a project of the Labor Party and the Debs-Jones-Douglass Institute ★ www.justhealthcare.org**

Worksheet 3: Personal Organizing Plan

1. What are my realistic goals for the Just Health Care Campaign in my union between now and November 2004?

2. What are my realistic goals for the Just Health Care campaign in my community between now and November 2004?

3. Who can I work with in order to achieve these goals?

4. What resources will we need to achieve these goals?

5. Who can we win over as allies to achieve these goals?

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Worksheet 3:

Personal Organizing Plan (page 2)

Name of Activity	Start Date	Finish Date	Standard for Success	Follow Up Actions
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				