

MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, April 4, 2007

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Shannon Perez, 303-547-5867

Chris Coil, 602-432-2001

Because Colorado's health care crisis leaves our aging population and our 770,000 uninsured residents at-risk...

America's Largest Union of Nurses and Working Families Will Propose a Comprehensive Health Care Reform Plan for All Colorado Residents

Thursday

SEIU and CAPE's "Better Health Care for Colorado" begins the debate over specific health care reform for Colorado. The plan will be submitted to the Blue Ribbon Commission tasked with sending health care proposals to the legislature. All health care reform proposals are due to the Commission this Friday.

Declaring that Colorado needs comprehensive health care reform, the nurses and working families of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the Colorado Association of Public Employees (CAPE) are stepping forward with a health care reform plan that would put the state on a path to securing affordable health care coverage for all Coloradans. The proposal would also help small businesses purchase affordable health care for their employees and ensure access to quality long term care for Colorado's most elderly and seriously disabled residents by putting a new focus on less restrictive and more cost efficient home- and community-based care.

"A typical patient comes to us sicker, often because they don't have access to affordable, quality health care," said Linda Hattenbach, RN. "Our plan will offer real choices that fit each patient's needs. Fewer people will be hospitalized or institutionalized, and communities will be healthier."

The "Better Health Care for Colorado" proposal would create a large scale Medicaid waiver plan for residents and small businesses, leveraging federal funds to support the cost. It would also enhance the long-term care system to provide the elderly and persons with disabilities and their families more home- and community-based options.

Over the next 15 years, the AARP "Across the States Report" projects there will be a 59% increase in Colorado's 85-plus population and a 124% increase in Alzheimer's patients.

Additionally, the SEIU/CAPE proposal includes these goals:

- ⇒ Help Colorado's small businesses purchase quality, affordable health plans for their employees.
- ⇒ Ensure greater access and affordability for working families.
- ⇒ Promote accountability in Colorado's health care facilities to protect patients.
- ⇒ Create incentives for preventive care, wellness, health education, quality outcomes and consumer empowerment.
- ⇒ Assure stable and sustainable funding that is fair, viable and cost-effective.
- ⇒ Move towards home- and community-based long-term care, giving patients more options.



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Better Health Care for Colorado Proposal

Press Conference Call

Thursday, April 5

10:30-11am

(last 15 minutes for Q & A)

Media Participants Call in:

(866) 835-8845

Mitch Ackerman, SEIU CO. State Council President, and health care policy experts will briefly explain our health care reform plan. A Nurse and senior will speak to why it matters to them and every Coloradan.