

Fulfill the Promise of Health Reform: **Fund MassHealth Outreach Grants**

Prioritize funding for MassHealth Outreach Grants in the FY10 Senate Budget

Line-Item 4000-0352 / Appropriation: \$3.5 million

Federal Revenue Obtained: over \$2.1 million / Cost to the State: less than \$1.4 million

With enhanced FMAP funding, the state will receive

OVER 60% FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT for these grants in FY10

The statewide MassHealth Outreach Grant program is essential in realizing the promise of health reform, especially during a time of economic uncertainty. Now, more than ever, Massachusetts residents need to know that they can count on outreach workers within their communities to help them retain health coverage. This critical program, which has been level-funded at \$3.5 million for the past several years, was not included in the FY10 House budget proposal.

MassHealth Outreach grantees make health reform work by:

- **Ensuring continuity of coverage**
- **Connecting people to care**
- **Providing local resources to residents at all income levels**

Outreach By the Numbers: Grantees Make a Difference

From January 2008 to December 2008, MassHealth Outreach Grant funding enabled 45 community-based organizations to assist a total of **194,313** individuals in communities across the Commonwealth. **That's over 4,857 people per Senate district!**

Outreach grantees helped:

- **147,919** individuals obtain information on health reform and the individual mandate;
- **97,881** individuals enroll in public health insurance programs;
- **72,000** individuals access preventive care and wellness programs;
- **48,000** individuals find a health care provider;
- **36,658** individuals complete the annual reapplication process.

Source: Traditional Grant Organizations Monthly Reports, Office of Medicaid, <http://www.outreachgrants.org>

Action Item:

Please ask Senate President Murray and Senate Ways & Means Chair Panagiotakos to restore \$3.5 million in funding for the MassHealth Outreach Grant program in the FY10 Senate budget.

The MassHealth Outreach Grant program ensures the unique and exceptional outreach, education, and coverage retention work currently taking place in a variety of settings across the state.

- **Ensuring continuity of coverage:** Enrolling in health coverage can be challenging; keeping it is even harder. Outreach workers assist MassHealth and Commonwealth Care enrollees with the rigorous annual reapplication process. They help consumers who have been wrongfully terminated, denied coverage, or bounced between different programs in the system. Outreach workers also help individuals transition to other qualifying health insurance programs if their circumstances change, such as after a job loss.
- **Connecting people to care:** Outreach workers help consumers navigate our complex health care system to ensure they get necessary care. Such assistance helps prevent episodic care based in emergency rooms and ultimately contains costs.
- **Providing local resources to residents at all income levels:** Outreach grantees provide expert information and guidance about health care coverage to people in their communities – from low-income people enrolling in MassHealth to moderate-income individuals enrolling in the Commonwealth Choice program. They help Massachusetts residents understand how to comply with the individual mandate and Minimum Creditable Coverage, which requires residents to buy specific types of insurance. Outreach workers provide the support and education individuals need to understand the new rules and take appropriate action.



This priority is supported by *Affordable Care Today*,
a broad-based coalition of over 75 organizations.

The ACT!! Coalition leadership committee

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