

Release: Missouri Health Care for All to Hold Celebration of 2016 Legislative Victories

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September 19, 2016

Grassroots health care supporters will recognize state lawmakers and volunteers who helped pass legislation creating Health Insurance Rate Review and raising Medicaid asset limits.

Missouri Health Care for All supporters will gather to celebrate the passage of two important health care bills in the 2016 legislative session and to present awards to key legislators and volunteers.

The reception will be held at the Community Action Agency of St. Louis County (CAASTLC), 2709 Woodson Rd., St. Louis, MO 63114. Light refreshments will be served at 5:30 and awards will be presented at 6:00 pm.

SB 865 contained important language creating Health Insurance Rate Review in Missouri. Under this new law, health insurance carriers will be required to provide transparency and justification for insurance pricing so that consumers can make informed decisions when purchasing health insurance. “Rate Review will serve to protect consumers from unnecessary rate increases. We appreciate the bi-partisan efforts of our elected officials in passing this bill,” said Jen Bersdale, Executive Director of Missouri Health Care for All.

Rep. Margo McNeil (D-St. Louis County) worked with two Joplin-area state representatives, Charlie Davis (R-Webb City) and Bill White (R-Joplin), to advance this legislation. Rep. McNeil will be recognized with a “Health Care Appreciation” award at the reception. Reps. Davis and White received awards at a reception in Joplin earlier this summer. **Other area legislators** who supported the legislation are also expected to attend.

The reception will also celebrate the passage of **HB 1565**, which raises asset limits for older Missourians and people with disabilities on Medicaid. This legislation will allow people to save more of their money for basic living expenses without jeopardizing their health care. Missouri Health Care for All (MHCFA) applauds the passage of this bill and the legislators who made it possible.

Governor Nixon has signed both SB 865 and HB 1565 into law.

As a grassroots organization, Missouri Health Care for All engages with volunteers and supporters throughout the state who believe that every Missourian deserves access to quality, affordable health care. Health Care Appreciation awards will also be presented to three key volunteers whose work over the past year was

indispensable to this year's policy gains: **Professor Sidney Watson**, the Jane and Bruce Robert Professor of Law at Saint Louis University's Center for Health Law Studies, and **Grace Flash** and **Dorothy Rodriguez**, both students at Saint Louis University's Center for Health Law Studies.

Bersdale states, "The power of Missouri Health Care for All is that it brings together people from all backgrounds, from all across the state, to defend and improve access to health care for all Missourians. We are deeply grateful for the contributions made by our volunteer awardees, as well as the hundreds of supporters who volunteered over the last year."

Crystal Brigman Mahaney, MHCFA's Deputy Director, notes that grassroots supporters from across the state have spoken out in support of rate review for years. "Our members understand that transparency is the first step to bringing down the high cost of premiums for Missouri families. Hundreds of Missouri Health Care for All supporters have voiced their support for rate review by calling, e-mailing and meeting with their legislators, as well as by writing letters to the editor and educating their friends and neighbors."

What: **Legislator and Volunteer Awards & Celebration**

When: **Wednesday, September 21, 5:30-7:00 pm (Program and awards presentation at 6:00 pm)**

Where: Community Action Agency of St. Louis County (CAASTLC), 2709 Woodson Rd., St. Louis, 63114

Who: Missouri Health Care for All leaders, volunteers, and local legislators from both parties.

For more information or interview opportunities, please contact Jen Bersdale, Executive Director, Missouri Health Care for All, at 314-651-6568 (cell) or jen@mohealthcareforall.org (mailto:jen@mohealthcareforall.org).

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