

THE INTERFAITH ALLIANCE OF ROCHESTER
+People of Faith Working Together For Justice in Public Policy+
Board Meeting of September 17, 2009

Attending: D.Bird, P.Brayer, S.Chamberlin, G.L'Esperance, B.J.Gottorff, R.Herman, N.Jaschik, E.Johnson, D.McNitt, M.Morich, G.Mott, A.Nahas, J.Noronha, G.Strother, B.Swan, D.White, and M.Wienk.
Member Guests: R.Genther and P.Meecher; Guests: Ibrahim Shikor and Nabil

1. Opening Reflection- By M.Wienk.

2. TIAR Health Care Resolution: M.Wienk and G.L'Esperance drafted; Motion by A.Nahas; Seconded by B.Swan to adopt the resolution as presented. Two language amendments were proposed seconded and defeated. The resolution, as originally proposed was adopted by a unanimous vote (See Attachment 1). It was further determined that this resolution (omitting the Explanation portion) will be disseminated by some of the following: Copies to our Congressional delegations and to the President, Media releases, e-mail to TIAR members, placement on TIAR web site, copy to national, send to faith communities with a request to sign on, and ask interested members to take to their respective faith communities

3. Immigration-- S.Chamberlin reported in the absence of H.Parreno. A proposal was to be made for TIAR to take the lead in the creation of a new Area Coalition on immigration. It is possible that this task has already been undertaken by the ACLU (Gary Pudup). We shall hold off further action until we can verify whether or not The ACLU has already begun the process.

4. NY State Constitutional Convention- N.Jaschik reported. TIAR has supported "Citizens for a Better N.Y. They are seeking a Constitutional Convention either via the legislature or if it is unwilling, at the 20-year public vote (2017).

5. Outreach Committee (for greater involvement of young people in social justice issues- D.McNitt reported. He presented a "Prospectus ," a plan to undertake the process. Several board members have offered to help. Focus will be on college age youth since a "Youth Core" project is under development by others (we shall connect with that project) Motion by N.Jaschik; seconded by E.Johnson, to co-sponsor "Youth Core." Motion by G.L'Esperance ; seconded by M.Morich to table this motion to the next meeting to obtain more details. Motion to table approved unanimously.

6. Faces of Poverty DVD- P.Brayer reported. There have been 2 presentations this past month and 3 are scheduled in the near future.

7. Project Homeless Connect - P.Brayer advised that this program to serve

homeless with multiple services on Thursday , 10/15/09 from 9 AM to 3 PM at the War Memorial. Volunteers are needed to help. See web site: homelessconnectrochester.org for more information and including how to volunteer.

8. Interfaith Understanding Conference sponsored by the Center for Interfaith Studies & Dialogue at Nazareth College in April 11 through 13, 2010 in the Nazareth College Arts Center- Motion by B.Swan; seconded by G.L'Esperance to co-sponsor. Approved unanimously.

The next board meeting will be Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 4 PM at Covenant United Methodist Church, Culver at Parsells.

Attachment 1:

The Healthcare Resolution adopted at the 9/17/09 Meeting appear Below:

A Resolution on Health Care Reform

The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester (TIAR)—an organization composed of members of Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and other faith communities—recognizes the injustice of nearly 50 million Americans without access to health care. We believe that this is a moral issue. We share the belief that each human being is sacred and possesses God-given inalienable worth. Health care is an essential component in promoting and protecting the inherent dignity and life of all individuals across their life spans. Moreover, should all people in the United States be provided with access to adequate and affordable health care, the well being of the entire society would vastly improve. Costs for universal coverage must of course be managed in such a way to further the common good. Providing health care should be a nonprofit endeavor. **Therefore, be it**

Resolved, that TIAR endorse “single payer,” currently detailed in H.R. 676, as the best possible plan in which the sole insurer would be the government much like the current successfully-run Medicare program and paid for through a modest progressive taxation system; **and be it further**

Resolved, that, until a single-payer universal health care program is established, TIAR support legislation that would provide a strong “public option” for people who cannot afford to buy insurance without some assistance from the government and that would guarantee a high level of quality care; **and be it further**

Resolved, that TIAR urge residents in the Greater Rochester Area to call upon their Congressional legislators to enact, and the President to sign, legislation by the end of 2009 providing adequate health care and insurance coverage for everyone in the United States.

EXPLANATION: Ideally, we would all be better off if “single payer,” or “Medicare for All,” as in the House bill 676, were the predominant proposed reform health care legislation. Now the total costs of health care per person in the United States is twice that of Canada and other nations that have national health care systems with much better results. The costs of providing Medicare are 3% in overhead as compared to the much higher administrative costs with the current private insurance system. According to Physicians for a National Health Plan (PNHP), the projected savings in costs if Medicare were expanded for all Americans would be approximately \$400 billion per year and would be more than enough to provide comprehensive coverage to everyone without paying any more than we already do. Under a single payer system, such as in H.R. 676, all Americans would be covered for all medically necessary services, including doctor, hospital, long-term care, mental health, dental, vision, prescription drug and medical supply costs. People would retain free choice of doctor and hospital, and doctors would retain autonomy over patient care. The insurance companies have launched an extraordinary and expensive campaign to defeat any public option, because they fear the loss of billions in annual profits. In an effort to get those currently uninsured health care coverage as quickly as possible, President Obama is promoting and many Congressional leaders are backing legislation that would contain a strong “public option” for people who cannot afford to buy insurance without assistance and that would operate alongside private insurance companies, ensuring coverage for the 50 million now uninsured.