

April 13, 2009

Honorable Mark Leno, Senator  
State Capitol, Room 4061  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Fax: 916-445-4722

**Re: Support for SB 810 (Leno)**

Dear Senator Leno:

The City Council wishes to express Albany's support for SB 810, the California Universal Healthcare Act, which will cover every Californian with comprehensive, affordable health insurance and allow every Californian to choose his or her own physician.

At some time each year, at least one in five Californians does not have health insurance. As health insurance costs continue to skyrocket, employers are reducing coverage and dropping benefits altogether. Half of all bankruptcies in the United States are now related to medical costs and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those bankrupted families *had health insurance at the time they became ill or injured*. The simple truth is that average Californians can no longer rely on their health insurance when they become ill or injured.

The United States spends twice as much per person as every other industrialized country on health care, yet we are the only industrialized nation where people go bankrupt because of medical costs. We have fewer physicians per capita than many other industrialized countries, and fewer hospital visits. Most importantly, our health care system ranks at the bottom of industrialized nations, according to the World Health Organization.

SB 810 will affordably cover every Californian with comprehensive benefits. Every Californian will be covered by a single plan that provides medical, dental, vision and prescription drug coverage, as well as hospitalization, emergency room care and transportation, laboratory work, skilled nursing care, mental health care, drug addiction rehabilitation, and chiropractic care.

The Albany City Council strongly supports SB 810.

Sincerely,

Marge Atkinson  
Mayor