

## **RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF THE EAST BAY**

WHEREAS, inspired by God's love, the mission of Catholic Charities of the East Bay is to (a) help people in need overcome poverty, (b) build compassionate communities, and (c) advocate for justice; and

WHEREAS, as a Catholic organization we are united by our common faith and commitment to the principles of Catholic social teaching which recognize and affirm the fundamental sanctity of human life from conception to natural death; and

WHEREAS, as reiterated by the United States Bishops, "affordable and accessible health care is an essential safeguard of human life, a fundamental human right and an urgent national priority" ; and

WHEREAS, access to adequate health care is necessary for the development and maintenance of life and for the ability of human beings to realize the fullness of life; and

WHEREAS, a just society is one that protects and promotes all human rights but especially those related to basic needs, such as health care, of children and the vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, the Catholic Church and affiliated organizations and orders have a long tradition of establishing and sponsoring hospitals, nursing homes, clinics and other health care facilities; and

WHEREAS, adequate affordable healthcare for all members of our community is an essential building block in accomplishing each of the three prongs of our mission; and

WHEREAS, we join the U.S. Bishops in recognizing and calling for the evaluation of all decisions and policies in terms of "their effects on those who lack the minimum necessities of nutrition, housing, education and health care" and further recognizing, as do the bishops, that meeting fundamental human needs must come before the fulfillment of other desires such as for luxury consumer goods; and

WHEREAS, under our current health insurance system, it is estimated that nearly seven million Californians lack health insurance during all or part of the year; and

WHEREAS, limited or untimely access to preventative health care or ongoing treatment of non-emergency chronic conditions results in greater suffering, a diminution in human dignity and an increase in poverty by enhancing the severity of treatable health problems so individuals incur even greater uninsured costs and lose income due to missed work or the inability to hold a job; and

WHEREAS, the California Conference of Bishops has endorsed SB 840 which proposes a system of universal insurance for all Californians; and

WHEREAS, the California legislature and Governor are also considering other proposals to reform the provision of health care in the State;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

1. Catholic Charities of the East Bay, hereby joins the US Catholic Bishops in calling for all participants in the health care and health insurance debate to set aside partisanship and special interests and place meeting the basic human right to adequate healthcare, without regard to the individual's ability to pay, foremost in their respective considerations.

2. Catholic Charities of the East Bay further affirms that the need for health care reform is not limited to the State of California but should be taken up and accomplished nationally.

3. Mindful of the current debate and ongoing discussions regarding health care reform in California, Catholic Charities of the East Bay hereby urges all participants in this critical state-wide consideration of basic human rights to seek compromise to achieve a system of universal health coverage providing adequate, affordable care to all Californians but that in so doing, the resulting law and regulations recognize the religious dimension of providing such services and explicitly does not compel religiously-affiliated health care providers to provide services or procedures that are contrary to the tenets of their faith.

4. The Board directs this Resolution to the Public Policy Committee to oversee distribution of this resolution to appropriate governmental, community, business and Church leaders and organizations.