

# Sisters Organize for Survival

A Project of Radical Women

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September 2009

Dear Friend,

**Sisters Organize for Survival (SOS)**, a project of Radical Women, needs your assistance to help protect affordable healthcare in Washington State.

**Basic Health** is a state-subsidized program that was created in 1986 to enable workers with the lowest income to acquire health care coverage. It allows people who labor in places with no healthcare, or can't afford the healthcare premiums where they are employed, to afford coverage. About 100,000 Washingtonians are currently enrolled.

To offset the budget deficit, Governor Gregoire and the Washington legislature have cut the Basic Health budget by \$238 million – or 43%. With no public testimony or participation, the Health Care Authority (HCA) decided to raise enrollees' premiums *up to double their current rates along with increased deductibles on January 1, 2010.*

Officials claim that individuals have the choice to stay on Basic Health. The reality is that thousands will be unable to handle the additional costs and will be forced off the plan. Originally the HCA wanted to cut 40,000 from their rolls; SOS believes this rate hike will make that happen. We deplore the sacrifice of low-income workers to cover the budget deficit.

**Sisters Organize for Survival** wants to stop this assault on the poor. We're launching a petition campaign and holding a public tribunal in mid-November to draw attention to this issue.

**Get involved!** If you, or someone you know, would like to work on the campaign or testify at the tribunal about your experiences with Basic Health, please contact Gina, Claudine, or Margaret (information listed below). Or, attend an organizing meeting. Beginning September 24, SOS will meet every Thursday at 7:00pm at 5018 Rainier Avenue South, Seattle. All who are interested in this issue are invited to participate.

This is an extremely crucial matter that will disproportionately affect low-income workers, particularly women of color. With the government's unwillingness to promote basic human needs, it is incumbent upon us to rise up and fight back against measures that threaten people's very survival!

In solidarity,

Claudine Fisher  
SOS Coordinator

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