

ICO Update



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Town Hall Meeting July 20, 2007

The ICO Town Hall meeting on July 20 focused on two areas of key interest to our members – health care and air quality. This inaugural issue of the ICO Update will bring all members up-to-date on the steps, actions and progress we have made in advancing our goals.

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Air Quality

A September 11 story in the Press-Telegram reported on a recently-completed survey that documented double-digit increases in air pollution at the Port of Long Beach. Despite the efforts of industry and regulators, volumes of smog-forming pollution from ships, trains and trucks jumped by 11 to 15 percent.

The survey gives added urgency to our efforts to improve air quality and the quality of life in those Long Beach communities most affected by the Port and the oil refineries. As was reported at the meeting, we were moving forward to get approval for SB974, State Sen. Alan Lowenthal's bill that would impose a \$30 container fee on businesses using the Port to fund air

quality improvements and infrastructure upgrades.

While eight ICO members did travel to Sacramento in August to meet with Gov. Schwarzenegger's staff and urge his support for the measure, ultimately the bill was pulled earlier this month. Gov. Schwarzenegger indicated his support of the concept and has promised to work with Sen. Lowenthal to draft a workable bill before January. A possible improvement to the original legislation might result in the money generated by the fees staying in Long Beach instead of having to be funneled through Sacramento.

Also, the pilot air filter program is underway at Hudson Elementary School. The "baseline" air quality testing work has been done, and the South Coast Air Quality Monitoring District (AQMD) is currently working on the engineering drawings for the air purifier systems, which require approval from the Long Beach Unified School District before construction can begin. LBUSD has also approved plug-in air filters for the remaining Hudson Elementary classrooms that are not part of the pilot program.

Health Care

Gov. Schwarzenegger recently announced his intention to call the state legislature back for a special session to tackle the state's health care crisis. His proposal for universal health care

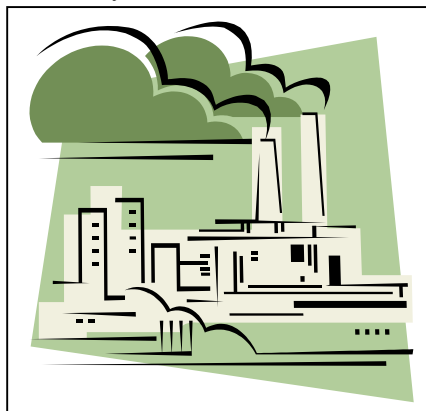
coverage for all Californians remains stalled, and we are fast approaching the deadline for the Healthy Kids program. If this program is not renewed, thousands of children will lose their health coverage.

The governor's plan was endorsed by the California Hospital Association, a key endorsement as his plan calls for contributions from many sectors of the economy, including hospitals, doctors, employers, individuals and government. We had also suggested instituting a tobacco tax to fund the program.

This past August, the PICO California Project held a legislative action day on health in Sacramento. Eight ICO members met with representatives of

State Sens. Jenny Oropeza and Alan Lowenthal and State Assemblymember Betty Karnette and shared their stories of struggle in accessing affordable quality health care. The California health care crisis is a priority for all three legislators,

and they support a single-payer plan and the imposition of a tobacco tax to fund such a program. PICO members also met with Speaker of the Assembly Fabian Nuñez, who pledged that at the least all children will be covered through whatever message gets through the special session.



**Tell your legislators to support health care for kids! Call the PICO Cover all Children Legislative Hotline to be connected to your state and federal representatives
1-866-633-6432**