



Reform Jewish Values and Health Care Reform

The Reform Movement was a leading voice in the faith community advocating for the passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, signed into law on March 23, 2010. The Reform Movement's position draws on some of the following Jewish texts and URJ policy resolutions:

- "Do not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor" (Leviticus 19:16).
- "Whoever is in pain, lead him to the physician" (Baba Kamma 46B).
- Providing health care is not just an obligation for the patient and the doctor, but for society as well. It is for this reason that Maimonides, a revered Jewish scholar, listed health care first on his list of the ten most important communal services that a city had to offer to its residents (Mishneh Torah, Hilchot De'ot IV: 23)
- Almost all self-governing Jewish communities throughout history set up systems to ensure that all their citizens had access to health care. Doctors were required to reduce their rates for poor patients, and when that was not sufficient, communal subsidies were established (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah 249:16; Responsa Ramat Rahel of Rabbi Eliezer Waldernberg, sections 24-25).
- Any place that does not have a doctor, whether one is healthy or sick, is not worthy of moving to for all the reasons set out in this chapter, for every person has responsibility for good health (Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Law Concerning Beliefs 4:22).
- Doctors are required to reduce their fees for the poor. Where that is still not sufficient the community should subsidize the patient. (Shulchan Aruch, Yoreh Deah, 249)
- **URJ 1975 resolution, "Health Care and Health Insurance"**: Calling for a "national comprehensive prepaid single benefit standard health insurance with no deductible, to cover prevention, treatment and rehabilitation in all fields of health care."
- **URJ 1987 resolution, "Health Care"**: Resolves to support legislation that ensures "all Americans whether or not able to provide for themselves are guaranteed essential health care coverage."
- **URJ 1993 resolution, "Reform of the Health Care System"**: Affirms support for an interfaith campaign seeking "a national health care plan which grants universal access to health care benefits... provide[s] for education, training, and re-training of health care workers as well as just compensation and affirmative action in hiring... provide[s] for cost containment [and] equitable financing and assure[s] quality of services."

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act reflects Reform Jewish values and will help fix our broken health care system. But some Members of Congress are threatening to repeal or de-fund the health care reform law.

Act now to protect health care reform:

- Call the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and urge your Senators and Representative to protect health care reform.
- Send an e-mail via the RAC's Chai Impact Action Center at <http://action.rac.org>.
- Sign the RAC's petition via the RAC's Chai Impact Action Center at <http://action.rac.org>.

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