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Mayor Manny Diaz Joins Other Elected Officials, Community Health Leaders and Healthcare Workers to Push for Healthcare Reform



Mayor Manny Diaz, joined by other elected officials, community health leaders and healthcare workers, held a press conference at the Borinquen Health Care Center in support of comprehensive healthcare reform. Pictured behind Mayor Diaz, left to right, are Julia Recibo, SEIU healthcare member, State Representative Ronald Brisé, State Representative Luis García, former State Representative Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall and Paul C. Velez, Chief Administrative Officer, Borinquen Health Care Center. (Credit: Jorge Perez/City of Miami)

MIAMI, FL – As Congress prepares for Sen. Edward Kennedy’s long-awaited healthcare overhaul bill to be introduced, a bipartisan group of city, county, and state officials joined together with leaders from Borinquen Health Care Center, Jackson Memorial Hospital and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Florida to lend support for comprehensive healthcare reform that includes a high quality and affordable public health insurance option. The press conference took place on Tuesday, June 9, 2009, at 11:00 am, at the Borinquen Health Care Center, 3601 Federal Highway in Miami.

“The need to improve our current health care system is critical. It is unacceptable that so many of our residents, many of them children, are uninsured,” said Mayor Diaz. “Health care reform is no longer just a moral imperative, but also a fiscal imperative. Exploding healthcare costs have created an unbearable burden for local businesses and government.”

With an estimated 600,000 people in Miami-Dade who are uninsured, lawmakers expect Kennedy’s bill, which includes a policy backed by the government for the public good, will help

ease the economic strain put on hospitals and premiums of those with insurance. A recent report in the American Journal of Medicine found medical bills are involved in more than 60 percent of U.S. personal bankruptcies. Three-fourths of those were families with health insurance.

Mayor Diaz will introduce a resolution during this Thursday's (June 11, 2009) Miami City Commission meeting supporting and calling for the immediate enactment of President Obama's healthcare reform. Mayor Diaz will also submit a resolution to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which he presides, in support of the principles of the Administration's healthcare reform plan, during the conference's 77th Annual Meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, this week.

Joining Mayor Diaz during the press event were Miami City Commission Chair Joe Sanchez, State Representative Ronald Brisé, Miami-Dade County Commissioner Sally Heyman, State Representative Luis García, former State Representative Dorothy Bendross-Mindingall, Chief Administrative Officer of Borinquen Health Care Center Paul C. Velez, President of SEIU Local 1991 Martha Baker, RN, and representatives from Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Congressman Kendrick Meek.

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