



JOIN THE HEALTH CARE FIGHT



How Will Health Insurance Reform Affect My Contract and/or USW Bargaining?

The impact of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act on future contract negotiations will depend upon the terms of your labor agreement and the current design of your health care plan; because USW negotiated contracts and health care benefit designs vary from one local union to another, it is difficult to anticipate the specific impact the Act will have on your contract.

The USW is training its staff representatives on the details of the Act and how to address the Act in negotiations, so your staff representative will be well prepared to address the impact of the Act on your contract when negotiations commence. The Act does not take away the Union's right to bargain over health care, so health care will continue to be a significant issue at the bargaining table.

We do, however, expect to see health care costs gradually decline as a result of the provisions in the Act to rein in discriminatory insurance industry practices and ensure that all employers are covering their workers. To the extent that costs decline, it should help us at the bargaining table.

No one can say what things will look like four years from now when the majority of the provisions in the Act go into effect, or even a year from now. We hope that reform will give workers more bargaining power. We hope that reform will give workers more leverage by lowering health care costs for everyone and in turn making our businesses more competitive globally.

But the reality is -- like it is with all new legislation -- that in addition to the above issues, we also have to wait and see how rules and regulations are written, how the insurance industry responds and what sort of stance employers take. Again, your union is here for you every step of the way and is monitoring this issue constantly and constantly educating its staff and leaders.

Stay informed. Get the facts. Visit www.usw.org/healthcare.