

## WMM4A MEETING FEB. 13, 2019 – SUMMARY

A productive and energetic meeting on a snowy evening! Slightly smaller turnout than usual due to the weather and it took a while for everyone to arrive.

**TRAINING NOTE - WMM4A has created a slideshow summarizing key points of the new M4A bill. Check it out!** Here's the link: <https://www.wmmedicareforall.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/M4A-bill-slideshow.pdf>

### PRESENTATION BY MARTY NATHAN ON THE GREEN NEW DEAL:

Climate Action Now and other local organizations are reaching out for groups to cosponsor a public forum on April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at Northampton H.S. with our elected officials. A new Congressional Resolution would create a plan to achieve net-zero greenhouse emissions, create millions of good, high-wage jobs, and promote social and environmental justice. Here's a link to the resolution: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolution/109/text>

We discussed the connections between the fight for a healthy planet and health care justice, as well as the broad issue of putting people before profits. There was much agreement and enthusiasm about supporting this proposal. WMM4A decided by unanimous consensus to cosponsor the April 22<sup>nd</sup> forum. Contact Marty Nathan: [martygjf@comcast.net](mailto:martygjf@comcast.net)

### LOCAL UPDATES:

**South Hadley/Granby hub** - working on passing town resolutions this spring in both of these towns. Contact Stephanie: [strandfamily01075sh@gmail.com](mailto:strandfamily01075sh@gmail.com)

**Hilltown hub** - working on town resolutions in Williamsburg and Chesterfield.

**Springfield hub** - planning a Speakout event on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> in the afternoon at Springfield City Hall. Local State Representatives and other public officials will be invited to listen to their constituents' concerns. Contact Jon Weissman: [jon@gogtt.net](mailto:jon@gogtt.net)

**Northampton hub** - showing Fix It with a Q&A afterwards at Indivisible Northampton, Monday March 4<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 p.m., 25 Mountain Laurel Path, Florence. Contact Nancy: [ntalanian@gmail.com](mailto:ntalanian@gmail.com)

**Holyoke hub** - Planning an event with Michael Lighty, a well-known Single Payer activist and speaker who is now on tour – Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4:30 p.m. at the Mass. Green High Speed Computing Center in Holyoke, 100 Bigelow St. Contact Chris: [craymartin90@gmail.com](mailto:craymartin90@gmail.com)

**Amherst hub** – Discussing a Town Council resolution under newly re-organized town government. Contact Barbara: [bzpearson@gmail.com](mailto:bzpearson@gmail.com)

**Legislative Listening Session** - March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2:00-2:45 p.m., Amherst location TBA. WMM4A will make a 45-minute presentation to local legislators. Format will be several people each talking briefly about their health insurance concerns from different perspectives. Contact Deborah: [levendeb2@gmail.com](mailto:levendeb2@gmail.com).

**Facebook update** - Deborah reported an unusually large response to a recent post. The post concerned a study finding that nationally, 45,000 deaths annually can be linked to the lack of health insurance coverage. The post was shared 122 times! Here's the link to the article: <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2009/09/new-study-finds-45000-deaths-annually-linked-to-lack-of-health-coverage/>

**REQUEST FOR WMM4A TO COSPONSOR** - Panel presentation on health care disparities and inequities associated with race, ethnicity, and other factors. **Saturday February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 12:00pm – 2:00pm, Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center, 100 Bigelow St in Holyoke.** Discussed importance of addressing inequities and supporting organizing among people of color. Agreed by unanimous consensus to cosponsor this event.

## **STATE NEWS:**

**Lobby day and Cosponsor reports** – About 100 M4A advocates rallied at the Statehouse on Jan. 23<sup>rd</sup> and then formed delegations to visit their legislators. Western Mass. was the best-represented region with about two dozen folks attending. At this time, 73 legislators have signed on to the new M4A bills – SD2062 and HD2974. This is more than one third of the whole Legislature. Reps and Senators can continue to sign on to SD2062.

**Western Mass. legislators** are well-represented among the cosponsors, increasing from a total of ten last session to 16 so far this session. New additions this session are Reps. Vega and Gonzalez, and Sen. Lesser, as well as newly-electeds: Sen. Comerford and Reps. Sabadosa, Domb, Blais, Carey, and Barrett. Previous cosponsors who again signed on are Reps. Tosado, Ashe, Williams, Mark, and Pignatelli; and Sens. Hind and Gobi.

**Hogan Bill** – Rep. Kate Hogan has submitted a bill – HD3448 – that proposes a special commission to study the feasibility and implementation of Single Payer in Mass. The problem with this commission is its obvious bias against Single Payer. It includes many appointees by officials who do not support or actively oppose Single Payer, as well as representatives of two powerful insurance lobbies: Blue Cross Blue Shield and the Mass. Assn. of Health Plans. The only advocacy organization is one that receives major funding from the healthcare industry. There are NO representatives of Single Payer organizations, or of groups representing people who provide health care, seniors, people with chronic illnesses or disabilities, or low-income folks. There is a representative of employers but not of working people. **Mass-Care is preparing a statement in opposition to this bill that will be widely distributed.**

## **NATIONAL NEWS:**

U.S. Rep. Pramila Jayapal will soon introduce her “Medicare for All Act of 2019” (replacing the former HB676). A national campaign, led by National Nurses United and Our Revolution, organized “barnstorm” rallies in cities across the country last week to gain cosponsors for the bill and to demand key committee hearings about it. About 50 people attended the barnstorm in Springfield on Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>, with several people volunteering to organize canvassing events to lobby U.S. Richie Neal about this issue. Here’s the link for the campaign:

<https://medicare4all.org>

**NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13<sup>th</sup>.**

**Stay in touch with WMM4A:**

**Website:** [www.wmMedicareforall.org](http://www.wmMedicareforall.org)

**Facebook:** WMM4A

**Email:** [info@wmMedicareforall.org](mailto:info@wmMedicareforall.org)