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*On behalf of the entire THCC staff and myself, I want to thank you and all our supporters for the good work you are doing. Sometimes it's hard to see how we are making a positive difference, but we are. I hope that you will be able to join with us at our Annual Meeting on June 21 to hear from national and state leaders in the struggle for health care justice and human rights.*

Take care,  
Tony Garr  
Executive Director

## “Sick Around the World” House Parties

In the PBS Frontline documentary *Sick Around the World*, five capitalist democracies demonstrate that health care for everyone is a human right, not a socialist ploy. Now is the time to hold up these models as strong evidence that we can and must create an American solution to fix our health care crisis.



The Tennessee Health Care Campaign believes that a window is opening to significantly reform our health care system. A majority of Tennesseans and Americans

believe the system is broken, but most are at loss about how to fix it. Without understanding that there are viable solutions within our grasp, many will do nothing because they will feel that there is nothing to be done and the window will close without significant reform. THCC needs your help to spread hope and solutions and build support by hosting a “Sick Around the World” House Party.

You are needed to help: 1) educate more people about our issue; 2) bring more people into our movement; and 3) raise money so we can fuel education and activities that build our base and advance our work. We can't think of a more fun way to do this than to invite friends and colleagues to your house for good food, good conversation & generous gifts of financial support. To host a house party or get more details, call toll-free: 1-877-431-7083.

## Long-term care victory

Tennesseans who need long-term care services are among the biggest winners in the just-completed legislative session. The major victory came as lawmakers passed and funded legislation to restructure the state's long-term care system.

“This was truly a year when everyone came together and made it a priority to provide care for the elderly and disabled in their homes instead of in an institutional setting,” said AARP Advocacy Director Patrick Willard.

Currently, Tennessee ranks at the bottom of the nation in funding for alternatives to nursing homes. The Long-Term Care Community Choices Act includes nearly all of the recommendations from an AARP consultant's study of needed long-term care improvements. It also includes protections for consumers that AARP requested.

The legislation, SB4181/HB4144, which will be effective July 1, 2009, was approved unanimously by both the House and Senate.

*Continued on page 4*



Marie Ferran

## Letter from the THCC Board President

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Marie Ferran and I am the new President of the Tennessee Health Care Campaign. I appreciate the opportunity to share a few words with the many people who share our mission.

These are both challenging and exciting times for the Tennessee Health Care Campaign. Thanks to efforts by Tony Garr and Susan McKay, THCC was awarded a grant from the Public Welfare Foundation that allowed the hiring of new staff. We now have local organizers in each Grand Division of the state: Greg Williams - East Division, Lori Smith - Middle Division, and Emily Snyder - West Division. Yolanda McClain is the new Administrative Assistant. Susan McKay is now the Communications & Development Director. Tony Garr, Executive Director, directs our staff and provides leadership for our efforts, as he has since THCC's beginning nearly 20 years ago.

The potential of THCC to move to a new level of advocacy and grassroots organizing is certainly exciting, but the challenges faced by uninsured and under-insured Tennesseans in our state are daunting. Unbelievably, 1 in 6 Tennesseans is under-insured, and 1 in 6 is uninsured! Unfortunately, the current plans of the administration create an even bleaker picture.

Between TennCare Spend Down and SSI/Daniels eligibility categories, over 140,000 people will be terminated from TennCare this year. And, despite the efforts of a number of state legislators, THCC staff, and committed volunteers from across the state, we could not convince the majority of our state legislators to establish a safety-net for those who, despite the need of life-saving medical treatment, will lose their TennCare health coverage.

Clearly the path ahead will be difficult, but the work of THCC remains the same, i.e., guaranteed affordable choice in health care for everyone. We have set an ambitious goal To accomplish our mission. Between June 1 and November 4, we will have 100 house parties and reach 1,000 or more individuals who are unfamiliar with the work of the Tennessee Health Care Campaign. The house party will offer pertinent, up-to-date information on the proposed health care plans of each of the presidential candidates as well as current information from the local front.

The format of the house party will be flexible. Those hosting the parties can design a party of 10 or 100 attendees, but the goal of each is the same. Those in attendance will leave with a deeper understanding of the health care crisis in our state and in our country and understand why it is critical for them to join the struggle for health care justice.

I believe the road ahead will be difficult, but I also believe it will be exhilarating. If we can be sure of nothing else, we can be sure we will have a new president. Who that will be and what direction health care reform will go I cannot predict, but it is my fervent belief that the time for health care justice has come. It will not happen quickly, but to borrow a phrase we must "stay the course" and continue the battle to ensure our goal of health care for all.

### 2008 Board of Directors of the Tennessee Health Care Campaign



THCC Board members: L-R, F-B: Tom Kahler, Knoxville; Lee Hutchison, Knoxville; Marie Ferran, Cookeville; Zenetta Thompson, Nashville; Pat Petty, Nashville; Candis Pelfrey, Centerville; Mabel Teamer, Jackson; George Haley, Nashville; David Case, Memphis; Jerry Spriggs, Nashville; Bob Herring, Brentwood; Bill Ives, Ashland City; Trey Hartman, Franklin; Dan Ramey, LaVergne; Board members not pictured: Sharon Cobb, Carolyn Newman, Lee Ann Swarm, Angela Webb, and Rikki Zee.

## Local Organizing Groups

All the LOGs have been busy, with successful Regional Training Meetings in March and April and town hall and in-district meetings with state legislators in April and May. All are gearing up for the Annual Meeting on June 21 followed by the "Sick Around the World" House Parties that will happen in the summer and fall.



Chattanooga LOG meeting with Sen. Bo Watson. L-R circular: Carolyn Jackson, Bambi Evans, Rosalyn Mitchell, Kathy Corley, Ron Naylor, Barbara Koller, Dr. Jane Furlong-Cahill, Marilou Coats, Sen. Bo Watson, and Juanita Moore



Memphis LOG members discuss presidential candidates' health care plans at their Regional Training Meeting (RTM), L-R: Randy Alexander, Carol Roy, NAMI-TN Martin, and Ethel Eskridge, Memphis



Cookeville LOG members learn about pending changes to SSI/Daniels at Regional Training Meeting, L-R, F-B: Kathleen & Ron Mohr, Sparta; Trudy & Dick Braun, Crossville; Barbara Reynolds, George Bernard, Cookeville

**Get involved in your area by attending monthly meetings**

### East TN

Contact: Greg Williams  
williams@thcc2.org

### Knoxville

4th Thursday  
7-8:30pm  
Church of the Savior  
934 N. Weisgarber Rd.

### Tri Cities

1st Thursday  
6:30-8pm  
Room 206  
Brown Hall – ETSU

### Greenville-Morristown Forming

### SE & Middle TN

Contact: Lori Smith  
lsmith@thcc2.org

### Chattanooga

2nd Tuesday  
(no meeting in June)  
4:30-6pm  
Senior Center  
957 Boynton Dr.

### Cookeville

June 10  
5-6:30pm  
Upper Cumberland  
Develop. Dist.  
1225 S. Willow

### Nashville

3rd Tuesday  
(no meeting in June)  
6-7pm  
TN Disability Coalition  
955 Woodland St.

### West TN

Contact: Emily Snyder  
esnyder@thcc2.org

### Memphis

3rd Tuesday  
5-6:30pm  
Memphis Center for  
Independent Living  
1633 Madison Ave.

### Jackson/Madison Co.

3rd Wednesday  
12-1:30pm  
Jackson Center for  
Independent Living  
1981 Hollywood Dr.  
Suite 200

### Dyersburg Forming



*Photos, from the top: Judy Garland, Johnson City; Randy Alexander, Memphis; Linda Drain, Maryville; and Louise McKown, Oak Ridge, speak their minds at THCC Town Hall meetings with state legislators*

## Spend-down re-determination tips

Adults with serious medical conditions and medical debt are losing their health insurance coverage at an alarmingly high rate. As few as 5,000 adults may remain on the program according to TennCare Director, Darin Gordon. On April 30, 2005, there were 97,000 adults on this program. The Governor promised to re-open the program with a cap of 100,000 adults. He has now capped the program at 20,000 very ill and low-income adults.

But there is something that is over looked by many who are undergoing re-determination. It is a question on page one of the Brown Pages: **Do you have a disability? \_\_\_yes or \_\_\_no.** If your physical or mental health makes it difficult for you to work or go to school, you need to check this box.

**Don't be afraid to ask for help.** Another question that could help you delay your re-determination is: "If you do, do you need DHS to help you with your papers? \_\_\_yes or \_\_\_no."

**In addition, several other items may delay your re-determination:**

**You have 30 days to reply.** Don't turn your papers in right away. You can hand deliver them to DHS the day before they are due.

**You can also ask for more time** if you have a physical or mental health issue, or learning problem, or a disability that makes it hard for you to understand.

**However, you have to do these steps before the deadline listed on your letter.**

## Long-term care victory, cont. from front page

Lawmakers also voted to increase funding by nearly \$4 million beginning July 1 this year for the Options for Community Living program. The program, administered by the state's Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities, provides funds for homemaker services, home delivered meals & caregiving services for the elderly or disabled who are not eligible for TennCare. Rep. Dennis Ferguson, chairman of the Joint Long-Term Care Study Committee, fought to include the funding for the program in the budget.

Funds were also included for legislation (SB1157/HB941) sought by Sen. Diane Black and Rep. Debra Maggart to establish a pilot program for self-directed care. The three-year pilot program will allow individual patients the opportunity to choose services they think they need and choose their providers. Consumers would receive a monthly budget based on their needs, and could use this money to hire personal assistant services, make home modifications, and more.

Residential Homes for the Aged received an increase from \$19.00 to \$25.00 per day reimbursement from the State Department of Health for residents whose total income does not exceed \$600 per month and whose income is limited to payments made under the Social Security Act. The increase was funded under SB3150/HB3332 sponsored by Sen. Diane Black and Rep. Tommie Brown. These homes had not seen an increase in reimbursements for several years.

Finally, the budget included funds for an additional 2,700 slots under the state's Home and Community Based Services TennCare waiver program. About \$8 million will be used this year of the recurring \$12 million in funding for the program, which brings to 6,000 the number of slots available for the HCBS program.

"AARP has worked for years to increase choices for care in Tennessee. That work finally paid off," said AARP Tennessee Director Rebecca Kelly.

## AARP: Divided We Fail

AARP recently released a survey of Americans 45 and older that looked at the behavior and views of boomers and their parents in light of the current downturn in the economy. We asked people how recent changes in the economy affected them and their family. The response was deeply troubling. Almost one-quarter of the people responding have prematurely withdrawn funds from their 401(k), IRA, or other investments. A third of the people we surveyed have stopped putting money into a retirement account. Sixty-six percent said they're finding it more difficult to pay for essential items such as food and gas. More than half said the same thing about paying for heating or cooling their home, or their phone service. An especially sad finding is that 14 percent say they have cut back on their medications. And three-quarters of the people surveyed said their elected officials are not doing enough to help.

We can turn this situation around. We can restore faith in the future—but only if we insist that our political leaders in Washington, D.C. break the gridlock, stop the partisanship, & work together to solve the critical issues of health care & long-term financial security. That is the clear message we're sending in a nationwide movement called Divided We Fail.

We launched Divided We Fail together with the Business Roundtable, an association of CEOs from America's largest companies, and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the fastest growing union in North America. We were joined later by the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), the nation's leading small business advocacy association. This may seem like a coalition of strange bedfellows, but indeed that is part of the message. If AARP, the Business Roundtable, SEIU, and NFIB can pull together, then surely our elected officials can pull together, too. We believe:

- *All Americans should have access to affordable health care, including prescription drugs, and these costs should not burden future generations.*
- *Wellness and prevention efforts, including changes in personal behavior such as diet and exercise, should be top national priorities.*
- *Americans should have choices when it comes to long-term care—allowing them to maintain their independence at home or in their communities with expanded and affordable financing options.*

In terms of financial security, we believe:

- Our children and grandchildren should have an adequate quality of life when they retire. Social Security must be strengthened without burdening future generations.
- Workers should be provided with financial incentives to save, should have access to effective retirement plans, and should be able to keep working and contributing to society regardless of age.
- Americans of all ages should have access to tools to help manage their finances & save for the future & better, easy to understand information to help them increase their financial literacy and manage their money wisely.

The top priority for Divided We Fail for the rest of this year is to get the presidential nominees to spell out their approaches to fixing health care and financial security, and to pledge action to put aside partisan gridlock and find and enact solutions. We've had plenty of analysis of red states vs. blue states. When it comes to health care and financial security, it's time to look through a different lens: red, white, and blue. Divided We Fail, but together we can do anything! [www.dividedwefail.org](http://www.dividedwefail.org)

## 20,000 children about to lose services

20,000 children about to lose critical medical and functional services!

Do you believe that children who have Down Syndrome, or cerebral palsy, or HIV, or total blindness, or total deafness, or muscular dystrophy, or severe mental retardation should be cut from TennCare? Well, that is what the state is planning to do. Since 1987, there have been 20,000 children who qualified for SSI payment because they had a "marked and severe functional limitation" for at least 12 continuous months, and have been protected by TennCare. However, no more. The Governor says that they do not qualify. Many of these children will lose critical medical and functional services that they are now receiving and they will not receive once terminated from TennCare. We need to ask our state legislators to assure us that these children will not lose critical medical and functional services simply because the services are not covered by private health insurance. The state needs to establish a safety-net and wrap-around services for these children before they are terminated.

## Losing your TennCare nursing services? No so fast.

**What can a patient do to keep private duty nursing from being cut?  
File an appeal NOW.**

### Here is what patients need to know:

- The state and the managed care contractor cannot cut private duty nursing without giving the patient notice in writing at least 10 days before cutting care. The notice must explain the reasons and tell the person how to appeal if they disagree.
- If the patient believes s/he needs the higher level of care, s/he should appeal immediately.
- The patient should ask to continue the higher level of private duty nursing services until after the appeal is over.
- When one files an appeal, one must tell TennCare why services are medically necessary.

### How to win your appeal:

- When you send in your appeal, explain that your doctor says that you must have the amount of private duty nursing that you are getting, and that it would not be safe and effective for you to get care in a nursing home.
- To win, you must show that the amount of private duty nursing you get is the least costly care that is "adequate." Adequate means "safe and effective."
- Get your doctor and your home health nurses to write letters explaining *in detail*:
  - *what your medical problems are*
  - *how many hours of nursing care you need each day*
  - *what kind of nursing care you need*
  - *why you need that care, and what will happen if you don't get it. (If you have had problems before at times when you had less care than you needed, your doctor or nurse should describe those problems.*
  - *why you are too sick for a nursing home and would need hospital care instead, in order to get enough hours of nursing care. (Your doctor should explain that nursing home care would not be "safe and effective" because you would not get enough nursing care.) Since a hospital is more expensive that makes the private duty nursing you are getting now the least costly care that is safe and effective and therefore is medically necessary.*
- Send the letters to TennCare.
- Share your story with local news media, your church, local elected officials, including your state representative, and state senator, and THCC.



*Photos: THCC Volunteer Leaders from Top-Bottom: Linda Nwosu, Johnson City; Marilou Coats, Chattanooga; Shirley Roser, Dyersburg; Libby Johnson, Knoxville, grills a state legislator; Bottom Right, L-R: Frank Zingheim, Crossville, Sita Diehl, Ex. Dir. NAMI-TN & Nancy Tidwell, Centerville, wait to testify before the TennCare Oversight Committee; Right: Louis Patrick, Memphis*



## “Raising Up Justice Down Home” THCC Annual Meeting – Saturday, June 21



Mike Miller

Our **keynote speaker** will be **Mike Miller of Community Catalyst**, a national advocacy organization based in Boston that builds consumer and community participation in the shaping of our health system to ensure quality, affordable healthcare for everyone. As Policy Director, Michael Miller focuses on providing policy and strategy support to state-based consumer health advocacy groups. Over the course of his career, Miller has developed expertise in the areas of Medicaid, SCHIP, Medicare, and developing state-level options to expand coverage for the uninsured, small group and non-group insurance reform, long-term care financing and delivery, managed care reform, and hospital community benefits and uncompensated care. Prior to joining Community Catalyst, Miller was the policy director for Health Care for All.

Our **opening session speaker** will be **Tim A. Chávez**, former political columnist for *The Tennessean* and now contributes to *Hispanic Link News Service* in Washington, D.C. He has been diagnosed with leukemia. “By the grace of God, I am alive to write,” he says. He believes in the right for persons to create change for Americans without health care insurance, for wounded veterans needing more help, and for Hispanic immigrants denied human dignity for the contributions they bring. He has received three national reporting awards for commentary from the Education Writers Association and the Will Rogers Humanitarian Award from the National Society of Newspaper Columnists.

**ANNUAL MEETING – SATURDAY, JUNE 21**  
**9:30 am - 4 pm St. Edwards Catholic Church - Nashville**  
**Register TODAY!**

1. Complete this form; 2. Enclose your registration fee of \$25 per person; and
3. Mail, email, or fax back to THCC no later than June 18.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Ph: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Free Lunch: meat unless you check here \_\_\_\_\_

for vegetarian lunch \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate any accessibility needs that you may have: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed in a check for my/our registration fee. \_\_\_\_\_

Please waive my/our registration fee. \_\_\_\_\_

**Complete this Registration Form & a Check for Registration Fee**  
**and MAIL, FAX or EMAIL back by June 18.**

**Tennessee Health Care Campaign, 1103 Chapel Ave., Nashville, TN 37206**  
**Fax: (615) 846-1946 • Email: [ymcclain@thcc2.org](mailto:ymcclain@thcc2.org) • T: 1-877-431-7083**

**St. Edwards Church ♦ 188 Thompson Lane ♦ Nashville, TN 37211**

**Map & Directions:**

<http://www.mapquest.com/mq/8-pat4IT9K> or <http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&tab=w/>

**Directions: I-24E or I-24W exit Briley Parkway S / TN 155 W**

Briley Parkway quickly turns into Thompson Lane. Drive approx. 1.2 miles from I-24, St. Edwards is on the Right. Ample free parking in the back.



Nothing good happens without YOU!

*Thank you for your interest in and support of the Tennessee Health Care Campaign & health care justice.*

To make a tax-deductible financial gift, use your credit card at our website:

[www.thcc2.org](http://www.thcc2.org) ;

or

mail your check to:  
THCC  
1103 Chapel Ave.  
Nashville, TN 37206

*Thank you!*

## Get involved with THCC this summer & fall

- Come to THCC's Annual Meeting in Nashville on June 21. *See page 7 for details.*
- Host or come to a THCC "Sick Around the World" House Party to see how other capitalist democracies are covering everybody. *See front page for details.*
- Educate yourself and others about ideas for health care reform being put forward by candidates running for president. *Visit [www.thcc2.org](http://www.thcc2.org) for details.*
- Get involved in your community with one of eight THCC Local Organizing Groups (LOGs). *See page 3 for details.*
- Help us monitor & improve hospital financial assistance policies for the uninsured & under-insured as part of the Hospital Accountability Project. *Learn more at our Annual Mtg. on June 21.*

## Hospital Accountability Project

Something is terribly wrong when 700,000 people in America go bankrupt each year because of medical bills. That's why the Tennessee Health Care Campaign is part of a multi-state effort to make hospitals more accountable through Community Catalyst's Hospital Accountability Project, [www.communitycatalyst.org](http://www.communitycatalyst.org).

Many hospitals routinely engage in financial practices that push patients into debt by charging uninsured patients nearly three times the rate of insured patients for the same procedures or by selling patients' bills to third-party lenders that charge up to 27% interest. Some patients penalized through such practices are later found to be eligible for financial assistance.

Tennessee has a law that restricts what uninsured patients can be charged. THCC is working with volunteers to make sure that hospitals are complying with the law.

Is your community hospital in compliance? Call us toll-free 1-877-431-7083 to see what you can do.



Tennessee Health Care Campaign  
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Nashville, TN 37206

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