

# The **11** **5** **EXPRESS**



Executive Office: 3223 E. Tremont Ave., Bronx, N.Y. 10461

Volume LXXIII No.2

Telephone 718 430-1500



Tape 718 904-1105

Summer 2009

## The Public Option is the Compromise

On the health care debate CWA and the rest of labor have advocated a single payer option as the health care reform this country needs and has deserved for several decades. The concept was simple, cover every American regardless of any pre-existing condition and eliminate the profit factor from the health care equation. What most people don't seem to realize is that the notion of a national health care system with the support of labor actually goes back to the Truman administration. On November 19, 1945 Harry S. Truman gave a speech that set goals for the expansion of hospital, doctor and nurse services, especially to rural areas. At the time 15,000,000 Americans had either no hospital available to them or for those that had a hospital available, the facility didn't meet federal minimum standards for the delivery of quality health care.

A health bill was introduced in congress as an expansion of Social Security, co-sponsored by Senators Robert Wagner of New York and James Murray of Montana in the Senate and Congressman John Dingell of Michigan in the House. The legislation became known as the W-M-D bill and was ultimately defeated. How ironic that the

bill's label would be used almost 60 years later to describe Weapons of Mass Destruction when its passage would have averted decades of mass destruction to the health and financial well being of so many Americans. In 2001 alone, half of the 1,458,000 personal bankruptcies was the direct result of illness and the resulting medical bills according to a study published by the journal Health Affairs. In fact on July 30, 1965 when President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Medicare bill into law at the Truman library he said it "all started with the man from Independence".

An article of the New England Journal of Medicine published in August of 2003 titled "Costs of Health Care Administration in the United States and Canada", indicated that in 1999 health administration costs totaled at least \$294.3 billion in the United States, or \$1,059 per capita, as compared with \$307 per capita in Canada. It went on to say that administration accounted for 31.0 percent of health care expenditures in the United States and 16.7 percent of health care expenditures in Canada, and concluded that "A large sum might be saved in the United States if

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"It's from the insurance company -- in lieu of coverage."

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Executive office: 3223 E. Tremont Ave., Bronx, N.Y., 10461  
Published monthly by and for CWA Local 1105

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Subscription rate \$2.00 per year. Of the amount paid as annual dues to CWA, \$2.00 is paid as a year's subscription to Local 1105.

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## And Now The Rest of the Story

You may remember from last year two stories that ran in the Express regarding representatives from the Great River office on Long Island who took ill, became disabled and simply passed through the looking glass and entered the world of nightmares and fantasy. In each case doctors lines were received by Met Life and deemed justified.

For the third level manager of Great River at the time, Jim Netska, this was unacceptable. Keep in mind Mr. Netska has no formal medical training that the union is aware of nor is he privy to any medical records of any employee. Despite the opinion of trained medical professionals, our rep's doctor and the nurse case manager from Met Life being in agreement, Jim Netska was determined to expose our members, his employees, as frauds. Jim took the extraordinary step of hiring a private security firm to do surveillance on each of these employees and provide both written reports and video surveillance

tapes of their activities. After reviewing the tapes and private security reports Jim Netska decided to terminate each one.

Our third and final arbitration of those terminated by Jim Netska was recently won as were the two before it. The activities the member was alleged to have been involved in that the company considered inconsistent with the member's disability, would never have been grounds for termination to a sane and rational person. To be fair we have never accused Jim of being either sane or rational.

As in any case where a member is on disability and we are asked our opinion as to whether any particular activity would present any problem with the employer we usually advise the member to use common sense. For instance, if out with a bad back, don't help friends move their apartment or go to the gym and lift weights. However everyone needs to eat and a trip to the supermarket to

pick up milk and eggs are probably OK. Visits to doctors and pharmacies are to be expected.

In this most recent arbitration case the member's activities were far from inconsistent with their disability. Consider the member's day beginning just before 10 AM. First stop, a rehabilitation center for physical therapy. Next stop the eye doctor to replace lost eyeglasses so the member could see, followed by a visit to the dentist to correct a painful abscess. After that it was off to a check cashing facility to obtain funds for food and bills. Next was a local convenience store (remember the milk and eggs advise) and finally to the doctor's office for an evaluation before heading home.

The lesson here is when on disability, use common sense. If the company can't use their common sense, there is always an arbitrator who will use his or hers.



# A Message from Keith Edwards



As this paper goes to press, your Bargaining Team has met and continues to meet, after a two week recess, concerning Verizon's proposal for a Dress Code for those members who have customer contact as well as those who work in an office all day.

After just a few meetings, it is obvious that this company really doesn't know what they want, except what Denny Stringl wants and that is no shorts, no t-shirts with writing, no flip flops and no hats of any kind. This so called corporate leader, who comes from the non-union Verizon Wireless side of the house, now wants to make the union side miserable with his waste of time proposals.

Verizon always has a hidden agenda and this local believes that while they waste our time on this Dress Code issue, we would lose sight of what they consider a bigger issue. Most recently we found out that this corporation did massive mailings to all customers advising

them to "Cut Their Cord" to save money and port their home number to their cell phone to have their number for home and on the go.

When presented with a copy of the letter mailed to a Verizon Wireless, FIOS triple play customer, their response was "It was an error". Well Verizon, if our members committed such an error, they would have been fired. So who in marketing have you fired or are planning to FIRE? This is very typical of a Corporation who has the motto of "Do as I Say, Not As I Do".

The next time Ivan or Denny walk through your office, ask them who is being held responsible for this so-called **ERROR**.

I would like to thank all our Chief Stewards and Stewards who volunteered to take a bus ride to Washington, D.C. and bombard Capitol Hill with our push for a National Health Care. Locals from all over the CWA footprint joined forces and pushed to make sure

health care was made available to all Americans.

The time is right for a change and with a President who is a true leader and is union friendly, our chances are good.

**REMEMBER IN UNITY  
THERE IS STRENGTH!!**

In Unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith D Edwards".

Keith Edwards

President



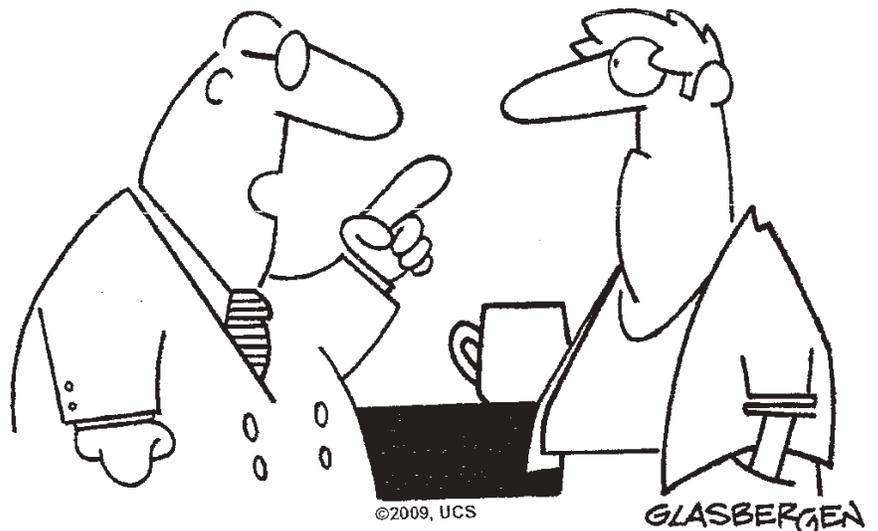
## From The Desk Of Paula Lopez

For the first time in a number of years, we've recently had approximately 172 representatives added to the Consumer Sales and Service Centers. Some were upgrades from within the company and many others were new hires from the outside. With the increase of competition and the company's commitment to FIOS, a mandate was issued from the top to extend the hours of operation for the CSSC, the SRC and the ACC across the country not just in New York. What we have been telling the company for at least the past two years is that they needed to hire more representatives and that they were headed in the same direction that caused major problems for them back in the early to mid-90's. For those of you that were here, you'll remember that the company also extended hours at that time as well in the CSSC from 8AM to 8PM (although now it's through 9PM). The company had such a shortage of representatives that there was mandatory overtime each and every single day. It was not unusual; in fact it was the norm to be working from 8AM-8PM, twelve hour days. N days were also cancelled and many forced in to work on their holidays. Instead of just working twelve hour days, five days a week, many were forced to work six days a week. This did not last a short

period of time. It continued for almost two years! The paychecks looked great but work took its toll. In some cases the strain caused absences for a variety of reasons. The end result was the same. We were right! The company could not run the business with the headcount that they had at the time. The company went through massive hiring around 1994-1995. This time it seems that they tried to avoid repeating the disastrous times of the 90's by hiring in anticipation of the extended hours edict. However they

don't have it quite right yet, because there is still some forced overtime. With the added headcount, I am also anticipating an increase in grievances. Unfortunately not usually because of something that you have done but as seen in the past management does not always do the right thing.

I've had the pleasure of meeting some of you during the union's new member orientation at the training center and I'm so happy to welcome you to CWA 1105. What I am about to say is



**"Aside from ulcers, heart attacks, bypass surgery, drug and alcohol problems, and broken families, a little hard work never hurt anyone!"**

not just directed to the new members but also a **reminder** to those of you who have been around for some time. What usually happens when you are warned of danger? Don't you avoid the situation or proceed with caution? Then why after repeated warnings do some of you ignore them and become another statistic? Unfortunately some even a dismissal statistic!

Let's take a look at some of the temptations that you will encounter. I believe the most popular ones are instant messaging, texting and cell phones. But let's not leave out that outgoing line on your desk. How many of you know that Big Brother is watching "Every Breath You Take" all day long? It's not a joke. That is the real world—life as a representative in Verizon. Not only are the force managers watching you on their screen and the managers physically observing but there is E Talk, the electronic monitoring device that not only records the full contact but also takes snap shots of all systems you have accessed during the contact, even the screen with the instant messages you are receiving and sending. Yes, it's all there, every bit of the message and the office gossip about who's with who. Let's remember the report that tracks all incoming and outgoing calls, time, their length and phone numbers. Do you have a customer on hold during that call? Are you closed and should be open? Are you calling the bank or placing a lunch order? Are you having an argument? Are you reading a magazine or talking to your friends? All of the above can possibly buy you a suspension and final warning for various codes violations including customer mistreat and misuse of company time and equipment. If there is a situation that requires your immediate attention then go to your manager and



"If you'd like to press 1, press 3. If you'd like to press 3, press 8. If you'd like to press 8, press 5..."

request the time to make that urgent call. Don't take it upon yourself without alerting someone.

How many of you have ever been asked to pin someone in because they were running late or had to stop to pick up something? I hope for your sake that your response was a firm **NO!**

When you get caught, and you will, your friend will not be supporting you because neither of you will have a job! We've had dismissals for that. What about fraudulent sales? Sales that the customer has no idea of what you're putting on their line or the little extra you forgot to tell them about? All it takes is one customer complaint and the company will do a dump on your sales, which means they will pull all of your orders for a specific period of time and call the customers to verify the sales. The allure of sales prizes and gift checks should not cause your insanity. What do you think happens when the customers say that they never ordered anything? You got it, dismissal! What about checking your boyfriend/girlfriend or relative's bill? Or issuing credit for them or a friend? You'll never get caught, right?

**WRONG!** You will pay dearly with your job! Can you abuse the customer if they are abusing you? **NO, bite your tongue and get a supervisor that's why they get the big bucks!** Why can't everyone

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## Help!

If you or a loved one needs help with a substance abuse problem or is suffering from stress or anxiety, help is only a phone call away.

**Call: Virginia Boscia  
(718) 430 - 1500  
Cell: (646) 996 - 4782**

All Calls Kept Strictly Confidential.

# Scholarship Fund

CWA Local 1105 has established the Scholarship Award Program for all members in good standing and their immediate families (spouses and children). There are 12 \$1105 scholarships available, four (4) for each division (Central, Eastern and Northern).

The scholarship applications are only available to members in good standing, convicted scabs and non-members need not apply as they are not eligible.

After all applications have been reviewed by the Scholarship Committee three winners will be selected at random from all eligible applications received for each division.

## Divisional Jurisdiction

Central	- Manhattan
Eastern	- Brooklyn, Staten Island, Nassau, Suffolk
Northern	- Bronx, Queens, Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Ulster, and Connecticut

## Eligibility

To be eligible you must meet the following requirements:

1. Must be an active member in good standing in Local 1105 or
2. The Spouse or child of a member in good standing in Local 1105.
3. A full-time college student working towards a degree (matriculating) at an accredited college or university, or
4. A high school student or graduate who has been accepted at an accredited college or university.

## Application Instructions

1. Fill out application answering all questions in Section A.
2. Send the application along with a copy of the letter of acceptance or any other documentary proof of acceptance or attendance at a college or university and mail to

**CWA Local 1105**  
**Attention Roberto Perez, Treasurer.**  
**3223 E. Tremont Ave.**  
**Bronx, N.Y. 10461-5707**

Final determination of eligibility will be made by the Scholarship Committee.

Winners will be notified by mail and announced in a later edition of the The 1105  
**EXPRESS**

**All applications must be received in this office by 5 P.M., September 9, 2009**

**All checks shall be made payable to the college or university applied for or attending.**

# Application for CWA Local 1105 2009- 2010



## Section A: Applicant Information

Name of Applicant \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_  
(last) (first) (middle) (Social Security Number)

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
(month) (day) (year)

Your Relationship to Member \_\_\_\_\_  
(self / spouse / child)

Are You Attending or been Accepted to a College or University \_\_\_\_\_  
(yes / no)

Name of College or University \_\_\_\_\_

Address of College or University \_\_\_\_\_  
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Do you fully intend to obtain a degree \_\_\_\_\_ If no explain \_\_\_\_\_  
(yes/ no)

If selected for this scholarship award, I fully agree to adhere to the rules and decisions that are made by the CWA local 1105 Scholarship Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(signature of applicant) (date)

## Section B: CWA Local 1105 Member Information

Name of Member \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_  
(last) (first) (middle) (social security number)

Home Address of Member \_\_\_\_\_  
(street) (city) (state) (zip)

Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
(area code) (number) (area code) (number)

Members Work Location \_\_\_\_\_

I am a Member in Good Standing \_\_\_\_\_  
(signature) (date)

## Section C To Be Completed by Local Officer

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is:

(applicant's name)

\_\_\_\_\_ A member in good standing of CWA Local 1105

\_\_\_\_\_ Is the spouse or child of a member in good standing of CWA Local 1105

## Section D To Be Completed by The Scholarship Committee

\_\_\_\_\_ Application Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Application Disapproved

If Disapproved, reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Scholarship Committee Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# The Public Option is the Compromise

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administrative costs could be trimmed by implementing a Canadian-style health care system.”

What makes up the difference between the Canadian model and the American model is the cost of for-profit. The following is just a partial list of total compensation for C.E.O.s in the health industry for just 2008:

- Ron Williams - Aetna**  
**\$24,300,112**
- H. Edward Hanway - CIGNA**  
**\$12,236,740**
- Angela Braly - WellPoint**  
**\$9,844,212**
- Dale Wolf - Coventry Health Care** **\$9,047,469**
- Michael Neidorff - Centene**  
**\$8,774,483**
- James Carlson -**  
**AMERIGROUP \$5,292,546**
- Michael McCallister -**  
**Humana \$4,764,309**

In addition to salaries for C.E.O.s are the payments to all those administrators whose job it is to deny claims and fight appeals. Remember the less paid out, the greater the profit. The mantra of those opposed to health care reform is to frame it as the “Government will be standing between you and your doctor” when in fact today there is an “Insurance bureaucrat standing between you and your doctor” and their primary mission is deny you coverage to maximize their profits.

What has been lost in today’s debate is that the Public Option is already a significant compromise to the purest form of health care reform, Single Payer. Rather than mandate the elimination of for-profit insurance companies from the health care delivery system, the Public Option is just that, an option. If you are happy with your

insurance company, the service it provides and the cost, you will be free to remain with that provider. Unfortunately for many Americans the lack of a Public Option is no option. Already insurance companies deny coverage outright or deny claims to the insured on the basis of pre-existing conditions.

Opponents of the Public Option claim that no for-profit insurance company can compete with a government program while at the same time claim that a government health care plan is significantly inferior to private health insurance. These are the same people who tout free market principles in any other debate. So why can’t a higher cost plan compete with an inferior lower cost plan? Or is it that a lower cost plan that doesn’t deny coverage or claims based on pre-existing conditions, a plan that isn’t motivated to deny claims to boost profitability is actually superior to what is available today?

Opposition to the Public Option is in many ways a red herring. When ever any health care reform is proposed, opponents, mainly Republicans, drag out the label Socialized Medicine intended to convey an anti-American, even communistic, connotation much as the AMA did when President Truman first proposed universal health care. Consider that the Declaration of Independence forcefully puts forth the notion that “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Note that life is the first of the unalienable rights. If all men are created equal, why is it that opponents



**"Alright, I want to know who's responsible for our profits no longer being obscene!"**

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# JOIN YOUR UNION IN A DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE METS



Sunday, October 4th  
1:10 P.M.

## METS vs. Houston Astros

\$20 PER PERSON - YOU WILL RECEIVE:

- TICKET TO METS GAME vs. Houston Astros
- \$5 in MET MONEY
- LOCAL 1105 GIFT TO ALL
- SPECIAL MEMBER GIFT TO ALL 1105 MEMBERS

**Due to the fact that the new Citifield is smaller than the old Shea Stadium there will be a six (6) ticket limit per member.**

**We only have a limited supply of tickets.  
Ticket orders will be filled on  
a first come first serve basis.**

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Please return this form with payment by September 9, 2009  
Make checks payable to **CWA Local 1105 Special Events Fund**  
**CWA LOCAL 1105 DAY AT CITIFIELD**

3223 East Tremont Avenue, Bronx, New York 10461  
Telephone: (718) 430-1500

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Location \_\_\_\_\_  
Floor \_\_\_\_\_ Work Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Town \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$20.00 per person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(limit 6 tickets)

**We only have a limited supply of tickets.  
Ticket orders will be filled on a first come first serve basis.**



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by *Beatrice Zapata*  
*beatrice@cwa1105.org*

# The Work and Family Corner

## We Need to Know....

### Are you caring for an elder parent or adult child?

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The Verizon NY/NE Regional and Local Work and Family committees are considering several new initiatives for our 2009-2010 programs. One of the initiatives we are considering is the possible reimbursement for adult care monitoring systems; such as a "Safety Pendant" that seniors or disabled adults wear on their wrist or as a pendant in the event they need to call for emergency care. The monitoring devices are activated by the adult in the event of an emergency and can contact fire department, ambulance, family member or police.

If you are interested in this type of device, or if you are paying for a similar appliance for your elder dependent, please let us know.

Forward an e-mail message to Beatrice Zapata at [beatrice@cwa1105.org](mailto:beatrice@cwa1105.org) be sure to indicate on the subject line "Safety Pendant". Additionally let us know what you pay for the device, how long your elder has used it and how it has helped you to balance your work and family life. The information provided, which can be supplied anonymously, will

allow us to determine whether or not there is a need for this type of Work and Family initiative.

If you care to discuss this matter, or if you have any suggestions regarding this initiative, please feel free to contact me via e-mail. If you have suggestions or ideas on what would be of assistance to you and or your co-workers concerning balancing of your work and family life, please let me know. I look forward to hearing from you.

Have a safe and pleasant summer.

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## Notification of Suspension of the "Fund"

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### Verizon's Dependent Care Reimbursement Fund Spring/Summer 09 Update

In March of this past year all fund participants were informed of the state of affairs concerning funding for Verizon's Dependent Care Reimbursement Fund (DCRF). Due to overwhelming fund participation the resources allocated for this initiative were depleted the fund was suspended effective May 1, 2009 through August 09 and no summer camp reimbursements will be paid.

This bargained for program had provided approximately \$188,000.00 dollars each month since September 08 to over 1600 CWA and IBEW 2213 employees. Approximately 100 management employees also received reimbursements for their

dependent care expenses from this fund as well.

In addition to dependent care reimbursements bargained for funds have also supported other initiatives such as D.V. 101 (domestic violence) training and the Men as Allies Program both programs intended to raise awareness and educate employees about Domestic Violence. CWA 1105 was the first to bring D.V. 101 training to members; over 3000 CWA Local 1105 members have attended our training classes since 2001.

In August of each year \$1.65 million dollars becomes available for work and family initiatives as required by the collective

bargaining agreements between Verizon, CWA and IBEW 2213. Meetings of the Joint Union-Management NY/NE Regional and Local Work Family Committees will be scheduled prior to September 2009 for the purpose of discussing various options available for the "DCRF" (which is expected to be reinstated effective September 2009) as well as other new initiatives.

Employees will be notified in advance concerning re-instatement of the "Fund" and any new initiatives prior to September of this year. All employees/members are urged to keep in touch with their local union office and union bulletin boards as new information is made available.



# From The Desk Of Paula Lopez

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get along or stay out of each other's way? You don't have to like everyone that you work with but you do have to be professional. This is not high school and you can't fight, curse, abuse, use racial or gender derogatory remarks or try to intimidate anyone without suffering the consequences. (Regardless of the reason; love triangle or romance gone bad or even baby's mama or papa.) The company has a code for that too. It's called workplace violence and they have no tolerance. Not feeling too well this morning? Rough week-end? You'd really like a day at home just to relax and get it together? You get this great idea that you'll call in an FCL day for your asthmatic son, who is on his way to school or your sick parent who's visiting out of state with your sibling. Don't do it! You may or may not get away with it. Do you want to take that chance? What about calling out sick? The company has been known to make home visits (to show care and concern, Ha!) or to call security and have them stake out your home with high tech video

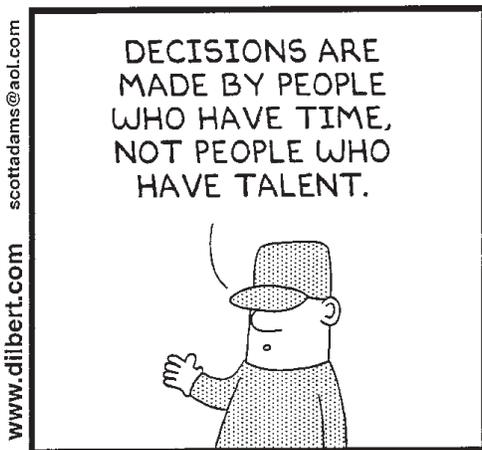
equipment (like a scene from a movie) and watch your every move (including inside your home, if your blinds or shades are open) Not a good idea to go to your child's class trip, the beach, movies, shopping or that part time job. You may have the leading role in a movie that you don't want seen. How about that disability absence for your bad back? How bad is your back when the video shows you returning home with both arms filled with shopping bags and shortly afterwards, you're being pulled down the street by your huge German Shepherd or shoveling snow? Doesn't look too good? Almost impossible to defend? Close.

After all is said and done and you get a tap on the shoulder that security wants to chat with you, what is the first thing that you do? **You exercise your right to union representation.** You tell security that you want the union there with you. Don't be surprised if they tell you that you don't need the union because they are not taking any discipline. That is true. Security doesn't

take discipline but as a result of their investigation, discipline can occur. Again you request union representation. You do not meet with security alone nor do you give them any written statements. Security already has the answers to the questions they are asking you. Remember security doesn't go where they are not invited! The same holds true as well when a manager requests to meet with you. The first question you ask the manager is if the meeting is for discipline and if it is, you know what to do. Get union representation. If you are advised that it is not disciplinary in nature, but you still feel uncomfortable about the proceedings, request representation.

Hopefully you will never fall victim to any of these circumstances. Always remember to use your head and make wise decisions. You will be accountable for the bad ones. I'd like to wish you and your family a very happy and safe summer and I look forward to seeing you on Member Appreciation Day at Citifield!

DILBERT® by Scott Adams



## The Public Option is the Compromise

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of health care reform seem to put forth the propositions that some are more equal than others based on their ability to pay or their lack of pre-existing conditions?

The Republicans do not stand alone in opposition to what appears to be a truly American right, Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) and Joe Lieberman (I-CT) are publicly opposed to the Public Option, as confirmed by a call to their Washington Senate offices on July 16, 2009. Senators who claim to have no official position on the matter like Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND), comment that Democrats don't have enough votes to pass health care reform that includes a Public Option. Even Senator Max Baucus (D-MT), Chairman of the Senate Finance

Committee, has stated publicly that he is inclined to exclude the Public Option from health care reform and is walking a fine line on the issue. When called for comment as to whether he supports or opposes the Public Option his offices response was that they didn't know. Can you imagine, the central policy issue of this Congress and his office doesn't know his position? Weak!

In a recent New York Times/CBS News Poll published June 20, 2009 72% of all respondents favored a Public Option. In the same poll Democrats favored the Public Option 87% with Independents tracking the overall population roughly the same at 73%. Even Republicans polled favored the Public Option 50% with 39% opposed and 11% with no opinion. If time is any

indication of converting opposition to health care reform to support, just try suggesting to Americans the elimination of Medicare.

We stand at the cross roads of history on health care reform in this country. Politicians seem to be lagging their constituents in their desire for a Public Option. It is up to us to remind those very politicians that this issue is critical enough to us to influence our vote in the next primary or general election. If you, a family member or friend is represented by a Senator who is opposed to the Public Option or is merely sitting on the fence, call Congress on (202) 224-3121, ask for your Senator and let them know how you feel. If they do support the Public Option, call anyway and thank them.