

MAIN MOTION ADOPTED BY THE 2011 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The WSNA General Assembly adopted, by a 2/3 vote, a main motion as follows:

The General Assembly reaffirms the 2009 main motion regarding the Washington State Budget Crisis and requests that the WSNA Board of Directors and Staff to:

1. Continue our support for funding of key health safety net programs such as Basic Health Plan, Apple Health, Public Health, and Maternal Support Services.
2. Continue efforts to develop communications and other strategies to increase awareness of RNs, stakeholders, policy makers and the public of the dangerous impact of the budget cuts,
3. Explore options for closing tax loopholes and increasing revenue especially during this budget crisis to fund essential health care programs,
4. Work with coalition partners on the implementation of federal health care reform and support for these key health safety net programs, and
5. Advocate for health care access for all residents of Washington State.

RATIONALE FOR THE MAIN MOTION

As our economy has worsened, the need for public services increases. Yet the budget crisis continues to shrink the health care safety net. A poor economy places a greater importance on publicly funded programs.

Washington State is facing a \$5.1 billion budget deficit with Health and Human Services sustaining the largest percentage of funding reduction, resulting in severe impact on tens of thousands of people:

- 60,000 people losing their coverage through Basic Health Plan (with 130,000 people on the current waiting list for BHP)
- 120,000 people losing adult dental care
- 20,000 people cut from chemical dependency, mental health, and medical services with the elimination of Disability Lifeline (formerly GA-U)
- 16,000+ children could lose Apple Health care coverage
- 80,000 people losing hearing and vision services
- Over 50,000 women with high risk pregnancies losing maternity support services
- 20,000 people losing physical, occupational and speech therapy
- 14,000 people losing podiatry services
- 2,600 people losing hospice care
- 71,000 people losing access to interpreter services

By denying these services, Washington tax payers stand to experience higher costs due to increased emergency room visits and more expensive treatment of chronic illness that

could have been better managed or prevented. WSNA supports preserving the infrastructure of safety net programs including:

- *The Basic Health Plan:* With the number of uninsured in Washington at a record high, the BHP is the only affordable option for Washington residents who are self-employed or whose employer does not offer coverage.
- *Apple Health for Kids:* This program provides health coverage for low income children. Washington has secured millions in new, flexible federal funding because of the state's leadership in providing health care for children.
- *Disability Lifeline:* This is the only source of medical care for individuals who are unable to work and don't have access to employer based insurance coverage or the individual market.
- *Community Health Centers:* The community health center model is uniquely designed to address the health care needs of vulnerable and underserved people and communities. They are a cost effective alternative to emergency rooms and a safety net for the uninsured.
- *Interpreter Services:* Enhancing health care access for 70,000 plus residents in Washington State.
- *Public Health:* The public health nurses and public health departments are the center of a quality health care system and the most cost effective system for disease prevention and health improvement.
- *Maternity Support Services:* The MSS program connects pregnant women with nursing care and other services with proven results that save money by reducing birth complications and long-term disabilities.