

Mr. Chair and Members,

My name is Amanda Steele from SEIU-United Long-Term Care Workers (ULTCW). Thank you for having me here today.

SEIU is committed to ensuring that our members and the public are educated about coming changes to healthcare, and what their options are to obtain affordable, quality coverage for themselves and their families. Two of our locals, ULTCW and Local 521, received statewide grants to conduct outreach and education activities on behalf of Covered California.

SEIU-ULTCW and Local 521 are in a unique position to reach and educate a large portion of California's uninsured, hard to reach population.

ULTCW represents over 180,000 IHSS providers and Nursing Home workers. We have a direct connection with these individuals and have established means of reaching them both in-person and through other forms of communication. Additionally, through our interactions with our members, ULTCW is able to connect with families and community members served by our members, enabling us to reach an even wider pool of individuals.

Similarly, Local 521 members work with and know the population Covered California is targeting. 521 represents 57,000 clerical, blue collar, professional and service workers in the public and private sector, including healthcare, homecare and eligibility workers. 521 members work for counties, cities, public hospitals, courts and community-based organizations. Many of 521s members provide health care services to tens of thousands of low income and uninsured residents working in county hospitals, county health departments, and enroll residents in county Medi-Cal, Calfresh, Calworks and other Social Service programs.

Our unions have dedicated a significant number of staff to develop and implement an extensive outreach and education campaign.

Over 100 of ULTCW's staff and members underwent the 2.5-day Covered California training to become Certified Educators. Our members are taking the lead on outreach and education to their fellow members and community.

Between Local 521 and their partners, SEIU Local 99 and Working Partnerships, 521 has roughly 100 trained educators trained and is actively partnering with local healthcare providers, community groups and thought leaders to educate communities.

It is important to both of our locals to continually engage our members and present opportunities to develop their leadership skills so they may serve as educators for their families and communities, and become leaders in healthcare.

ULTCW's strategy consists of community events, tele-townhalls, phone banking and educational forums. To date, we have provided outreach to over 70,000 individuals, educated over 5,000 individuals, and generated 415 leads for enrollment. Some of our major activities have included the Mexican Independence Day Parade in Los Angeles, a

healthcare forum held by the Democrats United for Progress in Northern California, and our first tele-townhall dedicated to informing our members about Covered California.

SEIU Local 521 has been diligently phone banking 5 days a week to reach out to union members employed in home care, child care, schools and nonprofits, canvassing neighborhoods and participating in community events. Their goal is to conduct 250,000 outreach conversations, 54,000 in-depth education conversations, and to collect leads for Covered California. They have already succeeded in having over 23,000 conversations in the course of 3 weeks, of which over 12,000 were in-depth education conversations, and gathered close to 2,800 leads.

Our teams continue to refine our messaging over time to best suit our outreach and education efforts, depending on the population we are trying to reach. The Covered California training has served as a foundation for creating a clear, informative, and easy to deliver message. The key to SEIU's success thus far has been building on our foundation of years of experience running large campaigns involving extensive face-to-face outreach and community organizing.

The culturally and linguistically diverse nature of our unions is also critical to our success in reaching the target population. Over 2,000 of ULTCW members speak a language other than English, including Spanish, Armenian, Chinese, Mandarin, Cantonese and Korean. Local 521 is also actively engaging with Hmong, Vietnamese, English and Spanish speakers across Northern California and the Central Valley.

We are confident that we will reach our goals in the Covered California Outreach and Education grant program, and have largely received positive feedback from the community members we have reached. It seems many people have heard about healthcare reform but don't have much information about how it will impact them and what actions they need to take to ensure they are covered. Many people are grateful to have someone to talk to face-to-face or one-on-one over the phone, and want to learn more. SEIU is happy to be a trusted resource for our communities.

While we are on our way to achieving our goals, we have also encountered some bumps in the road over the last few months, such as limited outreach materials and slow turn-around times for resolving issues such event approval. We recognize that these things are improving and appreciate the opportunities we've had to address our concerns with our Field Monitors and directly with Covered California. We are very much looking forward to continuing to be a partner in this incredibly important program.