

## No recess, no inertia

Michael Sean Winters | Jul. 28, 2009 NCR Today

"No Recess for Reform?" was the mantra at a press conference and prayer meeting at the U.S. Capitol this morning. The event, sponsored by PICO, a faith-based community organizing network, Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good, Sojourners and Faith in Public Life, was the kick-off of a campaign to pressure legislators to pass comprehensive health reform legislation this year.

During the congressional August recess, the coalition is planning a hundred meetings at the district offices of fence-sitting congressmen and senators. Additionally, the coalition will be running radio ads and collecting signatures for petitions. The Good Samaritan was called upon to provide affordable, accessible health care, Rev. Stevie Wakes of the Olivet Institutional Baptist Church in Kansas City, Kan., told the gathering.

The event featured three people who spoke about how the health care crisis affected them personally. Rev. Heyward Wiggins of the Camden, N.J., Bible Tabernacle Church told of a longtime friend who succumbed to cancer after being turned away from a hospital twice because he lacked insurance. Linda Filipini, a parishioner at Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church in Melbourne, Fla., spoke to the crushing cost of health insurance for her family-run business. And, Gordon Duvall of the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church in Denver discussed his own battle with prostrate cancer.

Most political commentators claim that failing to have a vote in either chamber before the August recess plays to the forces of inertia. But, if these faith-based organizers have anything to say about the matter, congressmen will be hearing from their constituents that inertia is not an option this time around.

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