**Statement of support for Single Payer Universal Healthcare**

We, (name of org) stand in support of single payer universal healthcare. Our members are being hurt daily by our current healthcare system as are so many others. The average premium for a family plan is over $20,000 a year now, and with co-pays and skyrocketing deductibles, even those able to afford to pay for an insurance plan are unable to afford to use it. The health insurance system is almost impossible to navigate, from the health insurance exchanges to the confusing red tape of the Medicaid eligibility application process. For many farmers, whose work is hazardous and who are self-employed, the enormous expense—in money and in time—of dealing with health insurance companies is an extreme handicap. We are unable to afford to offer many of our employees’ health benefits, and we are ourselves often one injury away from losing everything.

Other industrialized countries have universal healthcare, and many like Canada, the UK, Australia, Denmark and many others have single payer healthcare. There are not health insurance companies, just a single public option that immediately reimburses doctors for the expense of treatment. The citizens there do not have to worry about affording their healthcare. They do not have to worry that one injury will cost them their life’s work. They do not have to spend countless hours online and on the phone with insurance company bureaucrats who are often rewarded based on how many claims they deny. They simply go to the doctor if they need to go to the doctor. Period. And they do not have to worry about the fact that they cannot afford to pay for benefits for their employees, since their employees are already taken care of.

The US health insurance system is extremely inefficient. Our nation spends by far the most of any country in the world on healthcare--18% of its GDP, twice the average of all other industrialized countries--yet is 37th in health outcomes, behind Costa Rica and Malta. 60% of bankruptcies are due to healthcare expenses. Doctors now waste 40% of their time negotiating with health insurance companies instead of practicing medicine and seeing patients. Out of control health insurance premiums cut into the budgets of companies and small businesses, and these costs are passed along to customers, taxpayers, and even in the form of rising college tuition.

 It is estimated that switching to a single payer system would save us as a country a half a trillion dollars annually. It is estimated that 45,000 lives a year would be saved in a single-payer system. It is estimated that the extra taxes required to fund a single payer system would pale in comparison to the outrageous out of pocket costs we currently pay to insurance companies. We want the ability to simply do what we love without having to spend every available dollar and every available minute on health insurance companies. For this reason, we urge you and everyone to support and lead on an idea whose time is long past due: single payer universal healthcare.