

Mitzi Cagle, RN – National Nurses Organizing Committee 303-807-9647
HB 09-1273 Colorado Guaranteed Healthcare Act

Good afternoon, Mr. Chair and members of the committee –

My name is Mitzi Cagle and I have been working in the Medical Field for a total of 36 years and I have been a Registered Nurse for the past 11 years. I have worked in the Intensive Care Unit, the Emergency Room and as a Nurse Educator teaching Licensed Practical Nurses. I am currently a Small Business Owner in a Preventive Health Care Practice.

I am a member of the National Nurses Organizing Committee, the country's largest professional organization representing more than 150,000 Registered Nurses. The NNOC has endorsed and fully supports House Bill 1273.

(Only if they ask: Throughout Colorado, NNOC's network includes several thousand RNs and is growing very fast.)

The NNOC represents Registered Nurses who are at the forefront of the healthcare debate across the country and are lead proponents of a national Single-Payer system where everybody's in and nobody's out. RNs are also uniquely qualified to speak about healthcare and we are not shy when it comes to the care and safety of our patients. No one better understands the need for change than registered nurses who, for 24 hours every day, directly experience the pain and suffering of patients grappling with the current crisis and the irrationality of the present insurance-based system.

Health insurance is NOT healthcare....I left the allopathic (traditional health care) due to my frustration over our broken health care system. I have seen, first hand, as an ER

nurse how broken our health care system really is. People who do not have insurance wait until they are really sick and then come to the emergency room as the primary care provider. Many times these are illnesses that could have been prevented if they had access to healthcare. And the worst is when patients who have recently been discharged come into the Emergency Room with complications. This is because many times a patient is discharged based on the "bottom line", and not by what is best for the patient.

On behalf of NNOC's RNs and our patients everywhere, we ask that the committee vote favorably to pass this important measure because it represents movement in the right direction – and hope - for all Coloradoans.

Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee.