

# Hands Off Our Health Care Coalition

1251 E. Broad St., Columbus OH 43205 \* 614.258.3240 \* [www.HandsOffOurHealthCare.org](http://www.HandsOffOurHealthCare.org)

February 22, 2006

Dear Member of the School Employees Health Care Board,

We write to express our sincere concern over the effort to impose a mandatory health care plan on all public education employees in the state of Ohio. The organizations that make up the Hands Off Our Health Care Coalition represent thousands of education employees that will be directly affected by your deliberations. We opposed the provisions of HB 66 that created this board and directed it to design a statewide health insurance plan with the intent of imposing it on all school districts and their employees.

You have accepted a challenging and controversial assignment. While we have no doubt that the members of the School Employees Health Care Board have only the best intentions, the members we represent want no part of a mandatory statewide health insurance plan.

Developments since HB 66 became law have only increased our concerns about this process. We are deeply troubled by several events:

1. The failure by the governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the House to appoint the members of this Board in a timely fashion in accordance with the law, thus depriving the Board of the legal authority to do its work;
2. The usurpation by the Taft administration of the authority granted to this Board by giving a no-bid contract to Watson Wyatt consultants to design this health care plan – a contract that was to have been awarded by this Board after its own consideration of the matter;
3. The complete avoidance of any well-designed, independent, and reliable study of the feasibility and true costs of such a mandated health care plan, despite the fact that this was the precise recommendation of the Governor's own Blue Ribbon Task Force on School Funding.

These are matters in which you, as a recently appointed Board member, certainly have played no part. Unfortunately, these issues remain serious and outstanding.

At this point in time, there is no reason for any school employee in Ohio to believe that this plan, which was inserted in the budget bill by a small group of legislators with virtually no public debate or discussion, will be efficient or protect the health and well-being of themselves or their families.

*Coalition Member Organizations: Ohio Conference American Association of University Professors • Ohio Federation of Teachers • Ohio Association of Public School Employees AFSCME Local 4 • SEIU 1199 • Akron Education Association • Columbus Education Association • AFSCME Ohio Council 8 • CWA Local 4501 • Ohio AFL-CIO*

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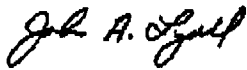
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Now that this Board is seated, we urge you to carefully consider these matters and take steps to ensure that no mandatory plan is forced on Ohio's teachers and other personnel without proper study and consideration. They and their families, and the children whom they serve, now ask you for your help.

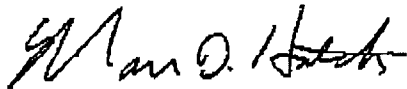
Sincerely,  
Hands Off Our Health Care Coalition member organizations



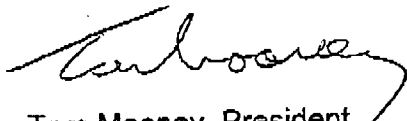
Tim Burga, Legislative Director  
Ohio AFL-CIO



John Lyall, 1st Vice President  
AFSCME Ohio Council 8



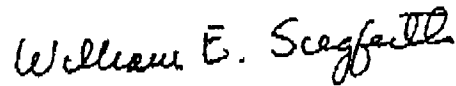
Mark Hatch, Director of Public Policy &  
Public Affairs  
OAPSE



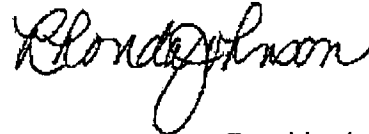
Tom Mooney, President  
Ohio Federation of Teachers



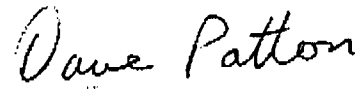
Dave Regan, President  
SEIU District 1199



William E. Siegfert, President  
Akron Education Association



Rhonda Johnson, President  
Columbus Education Association



Dave Patton, President  
Ohio Conference American Association of  
University Professors

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