

Alliance ALERT!

Spring

A Publication of The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care

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Become a Cyber Activist www.employeralliance.com

The power to influence lawmakers is now at your fingertips.

The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care launched its new web site on June 1. The site provides resources and information on health care mandates.

“Using this tool, our members can become cyber activists,” said Board Chairman Scott Miller. “The site is a resource that will help business owners remain up-to-date on issues that impact the cost of doing business. It helps us to quickly and conveniently make lawmakers aware of the burden we suffer from health care mandates.”

The web site is found at: www.employeralliance.com. Features include the *Legislative Action Center*, where visitors can read about current mandates and produce letters to send to their legislators; a *Media Center*; downloadable newsletters; research and membership information.



The Employer Alliance's new web site: www.employeralliance.com includes many resources to empower our members.

Infertility: Costs Are Ill-Conceived

One of the biggest mandates debated this year was the expansion of infertility treatment coverage. In May, lawmakers required all prescription drug riders to cover infertility drugs. After a three-year battle, The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care was successful in eliminating provisions that would have required employers to cover the most expensive infertility procedures, such as In Vitro Fertilization.

OUR MISSION

We are a coalition of New York State business owners and individuals who believe in keeping health care affordable for everyone by eliminating the financial burden caused by legislative mandates.

Fund Drive 2002

Money can't buy happiness, but it does pay for postage, printing, and other expenses that we incur to keep members informed. As a result of our recent fund drive, members have donated \$1,100. Thank you to our donors.

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The Affordability Grade

Does your representative make the grade when it comes to keeping health care affordable?

The 2001 Legislative Report Card, released this spring and sent to every Employer Alliance member, shows how state representatives voted on key health care issues during the 2001 Legislative session. The report card ranks lawmakers on their voting and bill introduction record, and their overall commitment to affordable health care. Only 12 lawmakers consistently voted against mandates that would raise health insurance premiums. Senator Neil Breslin (D-42) and Assemblyman Robert Warner (R-124) each received a perfect score of A+.



Others lawmakers receiving a grade of A- or higher were:

Assembly Members

Patrick Casale (R-108)
Thomas Kirwin (R-96)
John Faso (R-102)
Robin Schimminger (D-140)
Thomas Barraga (R-7)

Senators

James L. Seward (R-50)
Richard Dollinger (D-54)
James W. Wright (R-46)
Raymond Meier (R-47)

Assemblyman Thomas DiNapoli (D-16) and Senator Kenneth LaValle (R-1) had the lowest score of D-. A copy of the report card is available on our website: www.employeralliance.com.

More on the Web

Just as we oppose health care mandates on the state level, the Health Benefits Coalition is fighting against mandates imposed by Congress. The HBC opposes federal mandates that are increasing your health insurance premiums. Visit www.notonemoredollar.org

Introducing... The Board of Directors

Scott Miller is committed to providing his employees with a competitive wage and affordable health care coverage. Last year his company, *Miller Printing & Litho*, had to absorb double-digit insurance premium increases while larger organizations that self-insured were unaffected.

"It's important that we tell lawmakers about the disparity of mandates," Miller says. "Mandated costs do not affect companies that self-insure, only small businesses. It's important to remind lawmakers exactly who pays for these mandates."

For this reason, Miller is committed to his role as chairman of The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care Board of Directors.

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The Board is elected in August and members serve for two years.

Current board members are:
Robert Robinson, *president and CEO of the Otsego County Chamber of Commerce*; **Helen M. Rosplock**, *vice president/owner of the Bay Ridge Group*; **Mark Alesse**, *state director for the NYS chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business*; **Michael V. Barrett**, *a specialist in legislative and regulatory consulting in Albany*; and **Lee Marks** of *New York Health Plan Association*.

News from Albany

From adoption to massage therapy and wigs - lawmakers introduced more than 100 health care mandates in the 2001-02 legislative session. This legislation forces insurance carriers to provide a specific service or coverage. The primary burden is carried by small business owners, sole proprietors and individuals who direct purchase their health insurance. While many people struggled to pay for basic health insurance, lawmakers were considering mandatory coverage for massage therapy, infertility treatments, medical nutrition therapy, acupuncture, adoptive services and "Cranial Protheses," commonly known as wigs.

You make the Difference!

Members are the heart and soul of The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care. Throughout the year many of our members actively participate in our mission: sending *Letters to the Editor* concerning key legislative issues; helping with grass roots, mass-mail campaigns; donating money or services. You can take an active role in helping control the passage of health insurance mandates. Call Public Relations Coordinator Pamela Finch at (315) 363-9657, or e-mail employeralliance@yahoo.com.