

Alliance **ALERT!**

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A Publication of The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care

2004

Thank you!



Chairman Honored For His Commitment

The Board of Directors recently honored chairman Scott Miller for his work on behalf of the Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care. Miller, who is the owner of Miller Printing & Litho in Amsterdam, is a founding Alliance member and has served as chairman since the organization's inception.

The Board of Directors presented him with a commemorative clock in recognition of the time and commitment Miller as shown by meeting with state lawmakers and working to stop the passage of costly health insurance mandates.

Write Now!

www.employeralliance.com

Advocate for affordable health care!

If you think that your health insurance premiums are too high, don't just stand there – log-on, Write NOW!

A powerful weapon is at your fingertips – your computer keyboard. Visit the Legislative Action Center found at our web site. There, in two minutes, you can send a message directly to your lawmakers telling them not to pass any measure that could increase the cost of our health insurance premiums.

Let your state leader know you are paying enough. Log on today - The first step to controlling skyrocketing health insurance costs is only a keystroke away.

The Price of Politics

For many little girls, becoming a famous ballerina is a typical childhood fantasy and as a dance instructor, Jean Vilers embraces the physically-demanding task of helping to make their dreams come true. She is not the kind of person one would assume to be without health insurance.

Jean lives and works in Hudson. She spends 65 hours a week teaching students, helping them achieve their dreams, and countless hours behind-the-scenes handling the paper work associated with owning her own business. But as any small business owner or sole proprietor knows, hard work, passion and commitment can not protect her from the reality that faces so many in New York State.

Last January an increase in her health insurance premiums forced her to cancel policies on herself and two employees.

The US Census Bureau reports that of New York's three million uninsured, 65 percent – work full-time yet remain uninsured. Each year, state lawmakers consider close to 100 new health insurance mandates - politically motivated decisions that cost hard-working individuals between \$445 and \$1,066 per employee, per year while costing companies that self-insure nothing. The result is a growing number of people like Jean, who find themselves hapless victims of the price of politics.

Glens Falls Man Joins Governing Board

The Board of Directors appointed Jeff Leland in August to fill the remainder of a two-year seat vacated by the retirement of Helen Rosplock.



Jeff is the president of Leland Paper Company in Glens Falls. He has actively participated in many of the organization's grassroots activities, including letters to the editor, editorial board visits and writing to lawmakers.

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Premium Notice Campaign is Underway

Affordable health insurance is the greatest concern of sole proprietors and small businesses, yet most NYS lawmakers are clueless to the amount that you pay. Together we are working to change that.

Over 100 members have sent us copies of their 2004 health insurance premium information, or in many cases notes explaining why they can not afford health insurance, yet we are still under the number needed to send a strong message.

It is time to educate our elected officials so they understand the strain that rising premiums are putting on your business. The Employer Alliance is currently collecting 2004 health insurance premium notices and your renewal rate increase letters from our members so we can take them to Albany. We need at least 400 members to participate in order for this campaign to work. Once we receive enough notices, the Alliance will hold a press conference at the State Capitol and present this information to the appropriate lawmaker. We will provide more information in the near future. Campaign success depends totally on our ability to generate a large number of participants. Offering the cold, hard facts is the only way to facilitate change and by working together, we can show lawmakers that mandates cost money!

If you haven't done so already, fax or send us a copy of your premium notice and rate increase information. Any personal information will be kept confidential. When their decisions affect our ability to purchase affordable health insurance, clueless leadership is no longer an option.

New Column Brings Alliance News to Chambers of Commerce

Soon, our members can read more about New York's latest mandate issues in their chamber of commerce newsletter. Health Insurance & You is a new column that deals with the latest health insurance issues that will impact small businesses. The monthly column is being provided to chambers for reprint in their newsletters.

"The Employer Alliance has many requests from chamber executives for information that they can use to inform their readers about the high cost of health insurance mandates," explains public relations coordinator Pamela Finch. "Health Insurance & You," delves into the mandate issue and uncovers situations that impact the cost of health insurance premiums as well as inequities in the legislative system which can have a high cost."

The first article, titled "Where do my premiums go?" investigates the breakdown of insurance premiums and looks at how much money New York policyholders pay for services that they neither want nor need.

Health Insurance & You is available at no cost to chambers of commerce throughout New York State. To learn more about this latest feature, call (315) 363-9657 or e-mail Pamela.finch@verizon.net

Special Report:

Health Insurance & You



Where do my premiums go?

While a bulk of your health insurance premium pays directly for health care, a portion covers services and payments (health insurance mandates) required by New York State.

For an individual purchasing a family policy, this adds up to

Health Insurance & You is a new column being offered to Chambers of Commerce free of charge. Articles delve into health insurance issues and pending mandates that impact small businesses in NYS.