



# HEALTH CARE FOR ALL CALIFORNIA

---

## HEALTH CARE FOR ALL CONTRA COSTA

3346 Woodview Ct. • Lafayette, CA • 94549

The California Universal Health Care Act, (Senate Bill 810), applies to all residents of California.. The inclusion of undocumented immigrants, many of whom are asylum seekers or economically displaced, is relevant for important reasons. The following information is provided to enable Californians to make informed decisions.

From a public health viewpoint, disease and illness do not discriminate and germs know no boundaries. The Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act federal law requires the staff to treat anyone who walks in the door. Contrary to prevailing myths, costly emergency services are utilized by only 13% of undocumented immigrants (Contra Costa Times, 9/12/09). With the proposed California Universal Health Care Act, much less expensive preventive and/or primary care would be available to all.

Another myth is the complaint that universal health care in California would attract more undocumented immigrants to our state. Data in the July 2007 UCLA Health Policy Research Brief reveals no significant migration of immigrants to states due to the presence of public benefits. In fact the three states with some of the fastest growing Latino immigrant populations are also states with the least generous welfare provisions.

In the fall of 2009 the Health Initiative of the Americas center at the UC Berkeley School of Public Health produced, in collaboration with the UCLA Center for Health and Policy Research, a report, "Migration, Health and Work: The Facts Behind The Myths". The report provides an in-depth look at the realities behind the common misperceptions that immigrants come to the U.S. primarily to seek health services. It concludes "that not only do immigrants make less intensive use of health care services in the U.S., they often put their health at risk to perform jobs needed in our economy. It recommends that if Latino workers are expected to keep contributing in the U.S. labor force, they must be provided the means to care for the health and social needs of their families."

February 3, 2010