



For Immediate Release

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**Universal Health Care Foundation Rebutts
Waterbury Republican American Editorial**

Response by Juan A. Figueroa

April 9, 2008

Rather than hurling names and constructing straw-man arguments, editorial writers at *The Republican American* need to argue their positions based on facts. Indeed, “Exaggerated data, lazy argument” was a fitting title for their April 9 editorial’s outrageous mix of ad hominem attacks and specious reasoning. The link between lack of health care and premature death is a serious problem worthy of compelling and relevant arguments grounded in substance.

To trivialize the loss of a life caused by uninsurance is beyond reprehensible. According to Families USA, three adults die a week in Connecticut as a result of not having health coverage. This is outrageous. One life lost unnecessarily in our state is one life too many. A price tag cannot be put on human life. When a resident dies leaving children and dependents, the emotional as well as financial impact on our community, indeed our economy, is incalculable.

The facts speak for themselves. In 2007 alone, more than 350,000 Connecticut residents had no insurance. Reports by emergency room doctors and nurses show that the uninsured are often sicker, or even *beyond* treatment or cure, by the time they seek emergency room care. Prevention and ongoing access to doctors, afforded by health coverage, is what saves lives and dollars.

While the full picture of the uninsured underscores a crisis in our health care system that we must address, the truth is that people *with* health insurance also live in fear and under the burden of financial worry. A recent study by the nonpartisan Commonwealth Fund found that people *with* insurance worry over rising premiums, denied treatments, and lost coverage.

Instead of finger-pointing and pooh-poohing the deadly effects of a flawed health care system, let's focus on making sure that no one in Connecticut has to die because they lacked health coverage. Such discussions should be informed -- and certainly free of personal attacks.

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