

BULLETIN

UBCM 2009: City councils call for government action to stop for-profit health care

September 29, 2009

A resolution* calling for immediate government action to prevent the growth of for-profit medical clinics is on the agenda at this weeks Union of BC Municipalities Convention being held in Vancouver.

"I brought forward this resolution because I think that public health care in Canada is one of our most precious assets. As stewards of our communities, municipalities and the UBCM have an opportunity and responsibility to do what we can to protect health care services on behalf of our residents," said Victoria City Councillor Sonya Chandler.

The resolution, sponsored by the cities of New Westminster and Victoria, calls on the UBCM to request that the province take immediate measures to protect public health care by establishing a moratorium on the expansion and funding of private, for-profit surgical and diagnostic clinics, and instead promote publicly funded and administered outpatient facilities.

Municipalities around the province have heard from hundreds of citizens who have sent e-mail messages asking their local Mayors and Councils to support the resolution through an on-line campaign coordinated by the BC Health Coalition.

-Health Minister Falcon must take a leadership role in protecting British Columbians from private investors and insurance companies who are charging illegal user fees and billing patients for health services already covered by Medicare," said BCHC Co-chair Rachel Tutte.

The resolution comes at the same time as a group of Doctors from U.S. Physicians for a National Health Program are visiting B.C. to speak about the dangers of for-profit facilities and the private health insurance that clinic owners and investors are seeking to establish in Canada.

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