

Community Catalyst, Inc.

(Boston, MA)

Total Award: \$55,000 over 7 months

MergerWatch: A Forum on Fighting Religious Restrictions on End-of-Life Care

To support MergerWatch: A Forum on Fighting Religious Restrictions on End-of-Life Care to address the growing threat to patients' rights to self-determination from religiously-based restrictions on end-of-life care by mobilizing a broad-based coalition of progressive health care consumer groups, public health experts, health policy analysts, medical ethicists and researchers, health access advocates, reproductive rights groups, end-of-life care experts, health care providers, advocates for church/state separation and public policymakers to slow the spread of restrictive religious doctrine in the American health care system and protect patients' rights to self determination and free access to vital health services. In March of 2006, MergerWatch will organize a national forum that will coincide with the first anniversary of Terri Schiavo's death. The goal of the forum is to bring together disparate groups that may not have worked on this issue before, and begin the discussion of areas of common concern and potential collaboration. Forum participants will examine what has been learned from the Schiavo case, what obstacles remain for patients seeking to refuse feeding tubes or other types of end-of-life care, and the relationship between this aspect of patient self-determination and those encountered in other areas of medical care.

Program Contribution Breakdown:

\$55,000 Health Program: *Objective I, Strategy 2*