

**2009: THE YEAR OF HEALTH CARE REFORM?
FAITH-BASED INVESTORS SEE DOUBLING OF RELATED SHAREHOLDER RESOLUTIONS,
GROWING PUBLIC SUPPORT FROM CORPORATE AMERICA**

***More Than Decade-Long Campaign by Religious Investors is Bearing Fruit;
A Dozen Top Firms Have Now Embraced Strong Principles for Health Care Reform.***

NEW YORK CITY//January 14, 2009//How strong is the impetus from faith-based and other institutional investors for a breakthrough in health care reform in 2009? The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), a coalition of nearly 300 faith-based institutional investors representing over \$100 billion in invested capital, reported today that:

- The number of health care reform shareholder resolutions at major corporations will rise from 12 in 2008 to 26 in the proxy season for 2009, including such top companies as American Express, Ford, Qualcomm, Staples, Verizon, Yum! Brands Inc.; and
- The ranks of top U.S. companies publicly embracing principles for health care reform now stands at more than 12, including Starbucks (just this month), McDonalds, Target, Lilly and Aetna. Support for the principles continues to grow; Wal-Mart Stores, Inc., informed religious investors this week of the company's support for the principles.

ICCR and other institutional investors detailed how an intensive, decade-long push by religious investors has helped contribute to a critical mass in corporate America for sweeping health care reform in the near term.

Faith-based investors have urged America's corporations to adopt and publicly embrace principles for comprehensive health care reform (such as those based upon principles reported by the Institute of Medicine): (1) health care coverage should be universal; (2) health care coverage should be continuous; (3) health care coverage should be affordable to individuals and families; (4) the health insurance strategy should be affordable and sustainable for society; and (5) health insurance should enhance health and well being by promoting access to high-quality care that is effective, efficient, safe, timely, patient-centered, and equitable.

Rev. David Schilling, program director for human rights, Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility: **"In the decade since the demise of health care reform efforts in the 1990s, the faith community has continued to call for accessible and affordable health care for all people in a just and compassionate health care system. As long-term institutional investors, members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility recognize the economic burden providing health benefits for employees places on American corporations. Faith-based investors believe it is in the economic interest of portfolio companies to ensure that all Americans have access to healthcare that is affordable and provided equitably."**

Sister Barbara Aires, coordinator of corporate responsibility, Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth (NJ), said: **"Shareholders are important stakeholders in corporations. Our voice is relevant in the debate on health care reform. Health care reform is both a moral and a financial issue. A total of 79 ICCR member institutional investors have signed on to statement saying 'that access to health care is a fundamental human right, benefits society and serves the individual, the common good and employers.' We are encouraged that more than a dozen leading U.S. corporations have joined us in embracing the core principles of needed health care reform."**

Cathy Rowan, SRI consultant representing American Baptist Home Mission Society and Trinity Health, said: **"Shareholder interests and the public's interests are aligned on the need for comprehensive health care reform. We hope to see corporations present on the day when President Obama signs into law a bill that resolves the lack of access, affordability, quality and accountability in our current health system --- and be recognized for the positive role they have played in the public debate."**

Laura Shaffer, director of shareholder activities, Nathan Cummings Foundation, said: “**As long-term shareholders we want to be sure that the companies we invest in are positioning themselves to shape policy in a way that’s beneficial for both society and the bottom line. Corporations that ignore this debate do so at their peril.**”

2009 SHAREHOLDER SEASON OVERVIEW

In 2007-2008, ICCR members and other institutional investors filed resolutions with a number of companies requesting the boards of directors to adopt principles for comprehensive health care reform, such as those of the Institute of Medicine. Although some companies challenged the resolution at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), the Commission eventually told a dozen companies that they must allow shareholders to vote on the proposal to reflect “changing societal views,” thereby drawing the corporations deeper into the debate over the future of health care in domestic policy.

In 2009, the ICCR resolution has been filed at (in alphabetical order): 3-M Company; Abbott Laboratories; Altria Group, Inc.; American Express Co.; Apple Computer, Inc. (pending the meeting of filing deadline); Bank of America Corp.; Boeing Company; CBS Corp.; Coca-Cola Company; Direct TV Group, Inc.; Exxon Mobil Corporation; Ford Motor Company; General Motors Corp.; Home Depot, Inc.; Kohl's Corporation (resolution filed and dialogue held); The Kroger Co.; Lowe's Companies, Inc.; Qualcomm Inc.; Staples, Inc.; Starbucks Corp. (resolution filed and then withdrawn when the company placed principles on its Web site); Target Corp. (resolution filed, and dialogue held); United Technologies Corp.; Verizon Communications Inc.; Wyeth; Xerox Corporation; and Yum! Brands, Inc.

The 12 resolutions and their outcome in the 2008 shareholder season were as follows (in alphabetical order): Altria (5 percent); Alliant Tech (4 percent); Boeing (6 percent); Comcast (2.4 percent); Ford (4.6 percent); GM (3.7 percent); Loews (2.6 percent); Reynolds (.01 percent); UST (3 percent); United Tech (3.8 percent); Wendy's (no vote due to merger with Arby's); and Xcel (8 percent). In addition, primary filers undertook dialogues on this topic with another 20 publicly traded companies.

PRINCIPLES FOR REFORM EMBRACED

As a result of shareholder resolutions and ongoing dialogue, ICCR members have prompted companies to issue public endorsement of healthcare principles -- covering access, quality, affordability, and equitable financing. Companies that have issued such public endorsements include (in alphabetical order):

- **Aetna:** http://www.aetna.com/about/aoti/aetna_perspective/uninsured.html.
- **Bristol-Meyers Squibb:** http://www.bms.com/sr/key_issues/content/data/reform.html.
- **Cardinal Health:**
<http://www.cardinal.com/us/en/aboutus/files/pdf/Our%20views%20on%20Healthcare%20Reform%20in%20the%20US%209%203%2008.pdf> .
- **General Electric:** http://www.ge.com/news/our_viewpoints/healthcare_reform.html.
- **Johnson & Johnson (updated):**
<http://www.jnj.com/wps/wcm/connect/9e1732804bb7adebabb7efd8109ba68e/us-health-care-reform-principles.pdf?MOD=AJPERES>.
- **Lilly:** http://www.lilly.com/about/public_affairs/positions/#section3.
- **McDonald's:** http://www.mcdonalds.com/usa/good/people/health_care_principles.html.
- **Merck:** http://www.merck.com/about/public_policy/docs/uninsured_and_hcr.pdf.

- **Pfizer (updated):** http://www.pfizer.com/about/public_policy/pfizer_health_reform_principles.jsp.
- **Starbucks (issued 2009)**
[http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/Starbucks_Position_on_National_Health_Care_Reform\(12-4-08\).pdf](http://www.starbucks.com/aboutus/Starbucks_Position_on_National_Health_Care_Reform(12-4-08).pdf).
- **Target:** http://sites.target.com/images/corporate/about/responsibility_report/2008/full_report.pdf.
- **WellPoint:** <http://www.bcbs.com/news/plans/wellpoint-unveils-plan-for.html>.
- **Wyeth:**
http://www.wyeth.com/irj/servlet/prt/portal/prtroot/com.sap.km.cm.docs/wyeth_html/home/aboutwyeth/shared/Docs/uninsured.pdf.

ABOUT ICCR

The Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility (<http://www.iccr.org>) is a coalition of nearly 300 faith-based institutional investors representing over \$100 billion in invested capital. ICCR members bridge the divide between morality and markets by envisioning a civic economy that integrates ethical, environmental and social values. Inspired by faith, committed to action, ICCR members work to build a just and sustainable global community.

CONTACT: Patrick Mitchell, (703) 276-3266 or pmitchell@hastingsgroup.com.

EDITOR'S NOTE: A streaming audio replay of today's news event will be available on the Web at <http://www.iccr.org> as of 6 p.m. ET.