

## General Conference 2008

Denominational Health Task Force  
Legislative Petitions—Highlights

### Living Abundantly

*“I came that they may have life,  
and have it abundantly.”*

John 10:10b



GENERAL BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS  
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Caring For Those Who Serve

## **Recommendation #1**

**Improve the health of clergy and lay employees to support the mission and ministry of The United Methodist Church.**

*Discipline Paragraph: 1504*

### **Petition**

GBOPHB shall collect, analyze and disseminate group health plan data and health and wellness program information and shall use the data and information to:

- establish denomination-wide benchmarks and standards;
- identify and disseminate best practices for healthy lifestyles and health cost management;
- provide reports;
- share data and analysis;
- advise about health care plan designs, coverage, financial soundness and wellness programs; and
- recommend health and wellness strategies and guidelines for annual conferences, general agencies and bishops.

*Discipline Paragraph: 1506*

### **Petition**

- Each annual conference shall submit annual health care plan data to GBOPHB.
- By year-end (and biannually thereafter) annual conferences' boards of pensions shall submit financial valuations for projected medical liabilities.
- By year-end 2010, each annual conference shall submit a plan for addressing unfunded retiree medical liabilities.
- By year-end, each annual conference shall submit its portability policy for retiree health care eligibility, coverage, cost-sharing and benefits, and communicate the policy to clergy and lay employees.

### ***Petition Rationale***

GBOPHB will work to improve the health as wholeness in mission of clergy and lay employees and ease the Church's struggle with the costs of health care coverage, by sharing information throughout the connection and increasing access to information about best practices and plan designs.

## **Recommendation #2**

**Identify and assess opportunities for improvements in the employment systems and culture affecting the health of church employees.**

### **Petition**

A new task force shall:

- examine itineracy and appointment-making systems,
- examine and recommend improvements to supervisory systems,
- address processes for entering and exiting ordained and licensed ministry, and
- provide guidelines for sustaining a healthy work/life balance during ministry.

### ***Petition Rationale***

The denomination should increase its awareness of effects Church systems have on the health and wholeness in mission of clergy and reduce any negative impacts of Church systems by transforming the essential employment systems and structures of the Church that effect the health and wholeness in mission of its clergy.

## **Recommendation #3**

**Sponsor or participate in a group health care plan to ensure access.**

*Discipline Paragraph: 638*

### **Petition**

- Each annual conference shall sponsor or participate in a group health plan that covers its full-time clergy and full-time lay employees in the United States.

### ***Petition Rationale***

The denomination should ensure access to group health care plan coverage for active clergy and full-time employees of annual conferences. Sharing knowledge and information throughout the connection can help ease the Church's struggle with the costs of health care coverage.

### **Recommendation #3 and #4**

**Sponsor or participate in a group health care plan to ensure access, and respect the health and wholeness of retired clergy, lay employees and their spouses.**

*Discipline Paragraph: 714*

#### **Petition**

- General agencies shall sponsor or participate in a group health plan that covers full-time employees.
- General agencies shall provide access to Medicare supplement and prescription drug plans for retired employees.

#### ***Petition Rationale***

The denomination should ensure access to group health care plan coverage for active clergy and full-time lay employees of general agencies. Where there is a commitment to benefits in retirement for clergy and lay employees, that commitment should be honored and its current liabilities funded.

*Discipline Paragraph: 817*

#### **Petition**

- GCFA shall sponsor or participate in a group health plan that covers bishops.
- GCFA shall provide access to Medicare supplement and prescription drug plans for bishops.

#### ***Petition Rationale***

The denomination should ensure access to group health care plan coverage for bishops. Where there is a commitment to retirement benefits, that commitment should be honored and its current liabilities funded.

## Recommendation #4

Respect the health and wholeness of retired clergy, lay employees and their spouses.

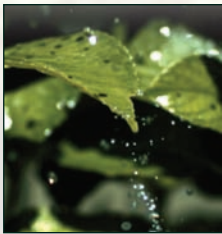
*Discipline Paragraph: 638*

### **Petition**

- Provide access for retired annual conference clergypersons and lay employees to Medicare supplement plans and prescription drug plans.
- Submit health plan data to GBOPHB.

### ***Petition Rationale***

Many believe that caring for retirees is part of the Church's responsibility. Where there is a commitment to retirement benefits, that commitment should be honored and its current liabilities funded. Annual conferences should strive to provide adequate access to health care coverage for retirees and their spouses.





GENERAL BOARD OF PENSION AND HEALTH BENEFITS  
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

---

Caring For Those Who Serve

1201 Davis Street  
Evanston, Illinois 60201  
1-800-851-2201  
[www.gbophb.org](http://www.gbophb.org)