

UM group hopes to build support for health care reform

Members say students have ignored the issue too long

by David Hill | Staff Writer [E-mail this article](#) \ [Print this article](#)



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Amy Hartman, a senior at the University of Maryland, College Park, and president of the school's College Democrats, announces Wednesday her group's plans to increase awareness of health care issues among students. She made the announcement at a news conference in the Stamp Union Student Center.

A group of students at the University of Maryland, College Park, are encouraging classmates to be more active in the debate over health care reform, which they say is an issue largely ignored by young Americans.

The students have started Generations United for Health Reform, a pro-reform organization formed by members of the university chapters of College Democrats, Organizing for

America and the Maryland Public Interest Research Group.

The group was launched Wednesday, less than a week after President Barack Obama visited the campus to enlist support for his health care plan. Organizers said the event partly motivated their decision. Members believe young adults are overwhelmingly in favor of reform, but aren't nearly as involved in discussing the issue as their elders. Their lack of activism is largely due to the assumption that health care isn't an issue to the young and healthy, said Amy Hartman, a senior and president of the school's College Democrats chapter.

"The myth that health care coverage doesn't affect young people is simply not true," Hartman said. "In fact, our age group might be affected the most."

The group supports the curbing of health care costs and a public health option. It also believes insurance companies should no longer be allowed to drop sick customers or deny coverage to applicants with pre-existing conditions.

The group plans to engage students through workshops and discussions with health care experts. Their hope is that students will discuss the issue with their parents and grandparents who might not be as supportive of Obama's plan.

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