



**Mississippi Religious Leaders Announce Support Campaign to Build a Constituency to Improve Our Healthcare System  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**WHAT:** Press Conference (in-person socially-distanced, and virtual)

**Link to register for virtual attendance:** <http://bit.ly/3kw6Mwf>

**WHEN:** Friday, March 5, 2021, 11:00 AM

**WHERE:** New Horizon Church International, 1770 Ellis Avenue, Jackson, MS

**CONTACT:** Dorothy Triplett, 601-750-1855 (call or text), or Hugh Hollowell, 601-278-0609 (call or text)

**Working Together Mississippi** is engaged in a multi-year effort to build a constituency for increasing access to healthcare by using Federal funds available through the Affordable Care Act. Ninety percent of these funds will come from the Federal government, and the remaining 10% required match will be funded by a self-tax paid by hospitals in our state. **No State money would be required.**

**Nearly 300 interfaith clergy leaders from all across the state (and the number is growing) have signed a letter expressing their support for this proposal. These clergy include: Jews, Muslims, Christians - Catholics, Methodists, Episcopalians, Missionary Baptists, The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, COGIC, and Church of Christ Holiness. We also have clergy representation from Baptist Memorial Hospital System.**

**Working Together Mississippi will conduct Civic Academies around Mississippi training a minimum of 500 lay leaders** who will in turn educate other voters and their legislators on the issues at stake for our health, our communities and the future of our healthcare system.

We are all aware of the large numbers of uninsured Mississippians, the rural hospitals that have gone bankrupt and closed, leaving large areas without emergency rooms, and thousands of people without hospitals within a reasonable distance. The human cost of these conditions is immeasurable. The economic cost is huge.

The issue of access to healthcare is **not** political, but it has been politicized to the point that our political leadership has refused to take advantage of Federal programs that would allow 300,000 additional Mississippians to receive coverage, and would help our hospitals reduce the cost of uncompensated care that currently runs \$660 million per year. It just doesn't make good sense to turn down 19,000 new jobs, and the opportunity to generate \$1 billion a year in economic activity and produce \$50-100 million in new tax revenue. This failure to act has caused severe detriment to Mississippians, especially in the midst of the pandemic.

**Please join us at the press conference to learn more about this statewide effort!**