



Fresno Metro Ministry
1055 North Van Ness, Suite H
Fresno, CA 93728
(559) 485-1416 Fax (559) 485-9109
E-mail: metromin@fresnometmin.org
Website: www.fresnometroministry.org



NEW LEADERS FOR BETTER HEALTH

March 29, 2005

In collaboration with: CBET Burroughs, Fresno Adult School Cesar Chavez, Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries, Fresno Center for New Americans, FUSD Parent Engagement Center, Fresno Health Consumer Center, Fresno County, Families First, Fresno Barrios Unidos, CBET Jefferson

Funding for Fresno Metro Ministry's Health Care Project is provided by the California Endowment, Fresno Metro Ministry donors, Kaiser Permanente, and Saint Agnes Medical Center.

FOCUS:

Advocacy Training with Nancy Amidei

Nancy Amidei

Legislators understand that every person who shows up at the capitol is connected to many other people who are concerned about the same issues

If you make one call legislators know there are probably five or six more people who care. A letter takes a little more effort. For every letter they think there must be about a dozen people who care. For every person who shows up in the capitol they think probably two or three dozen back home care. So when you stand there in Sacramento, they see you and a whole line of people behind you. Did you see the Lord of the Rings, the Return of the Kings? Do you remember the advocates, the little guys fighting the big, ugly guys? Like good advocates, they had to find their allies wherever they could. Just when it looked like they would be defeated by the big ugly enemy who did they get? The dead guys. So every time you saw the good guys, standing there shimmering in the background were their allies, the dead guys. You go to Sacramento. You stand there. They see shimmering behind you the powerful people of Fresno. It's very powerful stuff.

When many single people speak up, it creates one big voice that can bring about changes in policy

Some people still think that you don't have power unless you're writing a big check. It's not true. You have power because of the power of the vote, and politicians know that today's immigrants are tomorrow's citizens. Everyone who has a voice has power, whether it's by telephone or by letter or by coming to the capitol or by having a meeting right here in the district. You have a legislator coming to meet with you in April, coming here to have a meeting with you. That's power, and you want to be at that meeting just like you want to be at the meetings in

Sacramento. Thirty years ago there was no WIC program and no Food Stamp Program. There was almost no school lunch program, there was no school breakfast program, there was no senior feeling program, and there was no Medicaid or Medicare. There was no civil Rights Act and no Americans With Disabilities Act. None of those laws had passed. Now they're all in the law because people like you spoke up.

Votes are like butter and we as voters give out the butter

This is a famous classic. Are you ready for this story? This is a story you can tell to other people. Once upon a time there was a fellow who was newly elected to the United States Senate. He got so vain after his election that he thought everybody would want to talk to him, so when he was invited to a fancy dinner he came early. Everybody would want to see him, right? Instead, he gets to this big, fancy banquet hall and he's the only one there except for the waitress, and the waitress is doing her job. It's a fancy dinner so they aren't going to share the butter. Everyone has a butter plate and the waitress is putting the butter on the butter plate. Every time she sees a plate she puts one pat of butter. One plate, one pat of butter. One plate, one pat of butter. She goes right around the room. One plate, one pat of butter. Finally she comes to him. He smiles. He says, "Excuse me. I really like butter. Do you think I could have another pat of butter?" She says, "We treat everyone the same. One plate gets one pat of butter." She goes right on. He was not pleased, and that's the polite version. He was really mad. He thought about this for a minute. He got up and he walked over to her. He said, "Maybe you don't know who I am. I'm a United States senator." She said, "Maybe you don't know who I am. I'm the one that gives out the butter." Do you know why I'm telling you this? It's because votes are like butter and you are the ones that give out the butter. You have something that every politician in the city, the county, the state, and the congress wants. They want your butter, and when you walk in the door and you say, "Hello. I'm Nancy and I live in your district," a little voice in their head says, "Butter." And if you say, "I am part of a group in Fresno. We have 300 people in our group." "Butter, butter." "We are part of a much larger group across the entire valley. We have thousands of families concerned about clean air and healthy children." "Butterr..." That's a cholesterol hit. That's what they want. "Hi. I live in your district." "Butter." "I belong to a group with a thousand people." Butter, butter, butter, butter." We are part of a statewide coalition that touches millions of people in California." "Butterr..." Cholesterol hit. That's what you want. You walk through that door, plus you've got all those dead guys behind you, but they're really live guys. You have all your allies back here and the people who are standing there and you've got the butter. Don't worry if you are not currently a citizen. Don't forget they know today's immigrant is tomorrow's citizen. They have to listen. They cannot ignore people, and you have connections to a lot of other people. Being part of a group, you're much more powerful.

***To advocate in Sacramento, you need to know the name of your senator
or assembly member and where their office is***

You have a job to do and I have a job to do. My job is to get you ready for when you go to Sacramento. I'm going to tell you five things I want you to do if you go to Sacramento and one thing I want you to do if you cannot go to Sacramento. When you go to the capitol you will have help from people who have been there before. People have already been there and lived to tell it,

so you can get help while you're on the bus from people who will explain what's going to happen. You want to be sure you know the name of your assembly member and your senator and where their office is in the capitol.

You ask to talk to your legislator. If he's unavailable, you ask to talk to a staff person. If you can't do that, you leave a written note.

When you get to Sacramento, you go to your legislator's office. If you have an appointment already, that's great. Even if you do not have an appointment you go to their office and you ask to talk to them. "Hi. I'm from the district." "Butter." "I would like to talk to the senator." If the senator cannot talk to you, you ask, "Can I talk to one of the people on the staff, someone who works for the senator?" If they say, "I'm sorry but everyone is busy today," you say, "I would like to leave a written message," and you leave a little note. We're giving you a piece of paper where you can write out your message ahead of time. You leave a paper trail. Make sure they have paper evidence that you were there.

Be sure to tell your legislator your name, where you live, and the name of your group. Ask them to vote for the bill that you care the most about. Make yourself visible.

Whether you talk to them in person or you leave a little note, you want to be sure to include five things. The first is your name and where you live. Not your street address, just the name of your community – "Hello. I'm Maria. I live in Chico" – just so they know that you have their butter, you live in their district. Second, tell the name of the group that you came with. "I'm here today with Fresno Metro Ministry," or "I'm here today with" whatever group you want to mention. It may be your church or it may be another group. Just say whatever the name of your group is. Third, you ask them to vote for the bill that you care most about. "I came all the way to Sacramento because I want you to vote yes on AB 696, the Food For Families Act. If you can, say why you care about this. "I came all this way because I know hungry families back home in the district." Tell them a little bit about what you know. The fourth thing is go to the governor's office. It's in the capitol building. He probably won't have time to come and talk to everyone, but you can leave a message for him. We learned something at Hunger Action Day. He has a guest book in his office for visitors to sign their names. Sign your name and leave a little message like Feed Children or Healthcare for Children. It can be very short, one or two words: End Hunger; Clean Air Now. The fifth thing is that while you are there I want you to be visible. Edie and the others are going to make name tags. I'm very fond of bright, ugly name tags, the kind that if you wear it people can see it from all the way across the room, not the kind of name tag that has little tiny print so they have to come and harass you just to find out your name. It can have just three words, Healthy Kids Now, or two words, Stop Hunger. After they learn what the first one says, if they see five, six, ten, or three hundred people wearing the same badge they will know there is a big, organized group with their butter coming to visit them.

If you are afraid to speak to a legislator you can carry a folder with your message in a way that can be read by others

Here's another trick. You notice all the tricks I know don't cost much because I never, ever get to work with people with a lot of money. You don't need money to have a voice and to be heard.

You need a voice, right? If you are feeling very shy and you don't think you can talk, I have a way that you can be heard. You are going to get a folder with a packet with information. You can, if you like, write a message on the back of your folder. I just did that right now. If you go to Sacramento you are not allowed to carry a protest sign into the capitol building. They would make you leave it outside, but you can carry a folder, and then while they are talking you are so interested in what they say you clutch your folder to your chest – I'm just so fascinated by what you say! Wow! Isn't that fascinating? – So even if you feel very shy, you can't talk, and you have no voice, you carry your folder. This is not hard, right? Do not carry the folder down like this. This is not the right way to carry the folder. Just carry it up like this and you are an advocate. You have a voice. You are going to let everyone in that building know you are there to feed kids. They get the message. If you like, you can put a bill number, AB 696 or you can write it in Spanish or Hmong. You can put it anyway you like. You cannot swear. No bad language. But you carry a message. It's a good way to be an advocate. Very clever, huh? So anyone can go, anyone can speak. Even if you have no voice and you're very, very shy and you cannot speak up because you are so shy, you can carry a folder. Those are five things that you're going to do when you get to Sacramento.

Congressmen are back home in their district offices during Easter break. It's a great time to call them and voice your opinion about the federal budget.

Now, I have one more little assignment for you. I want you to know that this week your members of Congress are back here home for Easter week. They're taking a break from Washington D.C. They're back home. On March 17 they started to vote on the budget for the entire United States, the federal budget, and some of them agreed to a budget that would cut programs for hunger, cut food programs, cut Medicaid, cut social programs, cut housing, cut money for veteran's healthcare, money for children's healthcare, all kinds of bad cuts. They need to hear calls in their district office while they are home this week saying, "That is a bad budget. Please, when you go back to Washington vote no for that budget."

A trip to Sacramento is planned for April 13 to advocate for healthcare for all children in California

Carmen Arambula: One of the things that Nancy has talked a little bit about is this trip to Sacramento. We're going to be making three trips. One is going to be next month in April, and then we've got two more that are happening in May. In April we're putting together a big trip for people to go up to Sacramento to talk about healthcare for all kids in California. If you live here in Fresno but sometimes you're way up in the northern part of California because you are farming and you have to go up there to pick a certain crop, we want a plan so that you can still use the same insurance anywhere in California and all kids would be covered for everything – for medical, for dental, for vision – and it doesn't matter if you were born here in the United States, it doesn't matter if you were born here in California. All kids would get this. We're going to have somewhere between 3,000 to 4,000 people there. That's exciting! From just the Central Valley we're going to bring more than 400 people. The Central Valley, Fresno, we are committed, we are dedicated, we believe in this, we know this is right, and we want people to hear us and we want people to listen to us. If you want to come, if you want to say yes, we absolutely believe in this, you need to sign up. The trip is going to happen on April 13, which is

a Wednesday. We will take anyone who wants to go. If you want to bring your kids you can bring your kids. The trip is going to be happening starting at 2 o'clock in the afternoon to about 10 or 11 o'clock at night. You don't have to pay anything. We will get you a bus ride up. You will have food while you're there. You will be able to talk to assembly people and legislators while you are up there and also a woman named Kim Belshé. She's the one our governor talks to when he has questions about what's happening with health or human services. Health and Human Services deals with insurance, Medicare, Medi-Cal, Healthy Families, WIC, and programs that are running in your schools. If he has any questions about what's happening there he goes and he talks to her and he asks her, "What do you think we should do about this?" She's the one who tells him, "Well, I think this is important," or "No, we don't have to spend money over there." We're trying to tell her we need to spend money to get all of our kids covered for health insurance, so we would love to have you there. You can take your kids, but we won't have childcare. If you bring your kids up with you then you do have to watch your kids while you're there. We will provide dinner for your kids, too. Just remember, it is going to be a little bit late so they might be a little bit sleepy. They can sleep on the bus ride back. We'll have very comfortable buses. Every bus has a bathroom and snacks and a very nice bus driver. We've been checking them out. If you sign up I'll call every single one of you and tell you all the information. You're going to meet here at this church, so you can leave your car and when we come back late at night your car will be safe and you will have a way to get home. We can use a lot of the things we're learning right now when we go up there. We can bring our little folders. Phoua and I are making folders for every single person who goes. If you want, we'll make crazy name tags. Maybe we can even make a crazy shirt. Whatever you want, let us know beforehand.

Talking to legislators can make change happen. Don't be afraid if you're not a citizen because legislators know that you are part of a community of citizens.

Nancy Amidei: Two quick things. First is another reminder of why these trips to Sacramento are important. The food bank in this area is getting new director. That new director is a former legislator, and the reason she wanted to be director of the food bank is she said she remembered when people came to Sacramento from Fresno to talk to her about hungry families. It made such an impression on her that she's changing what she's doing in her life. That's the power you can have when you go to Sacramento. Second, Edie reminded me of something else about immigrants. If you are not yet a citizen, another thing the legislators know is that you have friends who are citizens, you have family members who are citizens, you are part of a community that includes a lot of citizens, so don't feel that you should not go if you are not yet a citizen.

You don't have to be an expert to be an advocate. If you're asked something you don't know you can say, "I don't know the answer, but I'll find out and get back to you."

So now the question is what are you going to say? If you are feeling a bit nervous about going to the legislature to talk to legislators here are five reasons why you don't have to feel nervous. The first is that you won't be alone. You're going to have 400 friends right there with you, and most of you will be in meetings with a group of people, not just one alone, so you can divide up who is going to talk about what. No one person has to know everything. Second, people like Phoua, Carmen, Edie, and others will help you to know what the issues are and what the bills are

and how to talk about them, so you will have practice talking about them and what the issues are. They can also help you find your way around the Capitol. They've been there many times. They know which way to go. They know how the elevators work. They know all that stuff. Third, there is a magic sentence. If you are worried that somebody will ask you a question and you won't know the answer, stop worrying because here's the magic sentence: "I don't know the answer to that, but I'll find out and get back to you." You don't need to know. Then you go tell Edie, Carmen, or Phoua, "They asked me a question. We need to get back to them with the answer," and they'll go back and they'll give the answer. How easy! You just became an expert. That's what the experts say. I heard a governor tell that to a whole room full of people. Some one asked the governor a question about healthcare and he said, "Where's my staff person on healthcare? I need help with that answer." And then he said, "I don't know the answer because my staff person is not here, but I'll find out and I'll get the answer back to you before you leave today." He told a big auditorium full of people that. If a governor can say it, you can say it. "I don't know the answer, but I'll find out and get back to you." Perfectly reasonable.

People who can tell a story move the hearts of legislators much better than experts

Still nervous? A little bit? Well, if you are thinking that you are not an expert, that you don't know enough, I can promise you that we can find the experts, but the experts are not the people who move the hearts of the legislators. It's the people who can tell a story, a story that reaches them in their heart. What we want to do now is think about how you can tell your story in a brief and compelling way. We have to remember they are very busy people. They see many, many, many people during the day, so a very short story is often the best, and then if they have questions they will ask. We're going to help you tell your story in a friendly way that will help the legislators. If you flip over the page it has an outline for you. I want you to try and fill in just a little bit now. You're going to put down your name and where you live, just the town or the community, not the street address. You're going to put down the group that you're connected to, whichever group you want to name. By the way, if you fill these in now, when you're on the bus they'll have more copies in case you want to make a new, cleaner copy. This is so you can practice. Your group can be a small group. You can say, "I am part of 20 parents and our children have asthma," or you can say, "I belong to a congregation that's worried about obesity in children," or "I care about hunger." The next little block is why you came. "I came all this way because I care about..." and just in a sentence or two why you care. Why do you care about this enough to get on that bus and spend all day? Why do you care enough to go talk to your legislators? The last little part is what you want them to do, and that's where the briefings on the bus and when you get to Sacramento will be very helpful because they'll be able to tell you what's happening right then in the capitol. Do we need to ask them for a vote today or do we need to ask them for help on the budget? You can leave that one blank for today, but I want you to try now to fill in the first parts and then I'm going to come around and we're going to see if anyone would like to share with the group what you wrote down.

Nancy Amidei: Is there a volunteer who would like to share what they would say to a legislator?

Participant: Hi. My name is Rosario Garcia. I live in Fresno. I am a student at Fresno Adult School. I am attending class at Cesar Chavez campus. About 10,000 students attend class at my school and I want them all to be healthy.

Nancy Amidei: Yes! Perfect! That's what you want to do. That's a great message. Excellent!

Participant: (Translation) I would tell the senator listen to us and please don't throw away our petitions. When you want our votes you come to us, you promise things, and then when we go to you, you don't listen, so listen and don't throw away our petitions. Thank you.

Nancy Amidei: That is very good. I want to offer one small piece of advice. If we want to tell them a strong message we have to say it very politely so they do not think we are threatening them, but that is an excellent message. Say, "Please do not throw away our petitions. Listen to us." That's excellent! You're going to make a wonderful, wonderful advocate! Good for you!

Participant: I'm Ali Shabaz from Fresno, California. I'm connected to Jahmai Ministry, Metro Ministry, and Kearney Villa Community Garden. I came to represent my community and organizations. I care about the health and welfare of the California community at large, the youth and the children, and regarding health and food matters.

Nancy Amidei: That's a great message! Did you hear that? He said, "I came because I care about the community and I care about the children and the youth in my community." That's a great message! I want to point out that we have had two or three women and only one man. Maybe the men are too shy. Do we have any more women who will speak up?

Participant: Good morning. My name is Chu Apelo. I live in Fresno, California, the Central Valley. I am connected with Fresno Metro Ministry and Fresno Center for New Americans. I'm here today because I am concerned about my community in the Fresno area. I know that we need help in the Central Valley because in Fresno here every day is cloudy because of the pollution. I want the pollution cleaned in Fresno because here we have many healthy vegetables and fruits. Every spring break we have many allergies and people get sick all the time. I'm here today because I want you to help my children. I need my children to be healthy and the community to be healthy, and I know that includes me. From 1988 to 1996 I have asthma and I know in the community many people have asthma, too. That's very dangerous. You're here because we need your help. We support you to be in the state here because we need you. You are the power, so we need your help. Thank you.

Nancy Amidei: That's excellent! This is very good! She just did something very good that I think you could hear. She painted a little word picture. It only needed one sentence, but she said, "I come from Fresno and every day the sky is gray and cloudy," and then she paused and she said, "because there is pollution." And then she reminded them this is a place that grows fruits and vegetables, healthy food, but the children are not healthy. "I care about the people who cannot breathe in my community." That's a very good message. Super! Thank you!

***Practicing what you want to say makes it easier to talk to people
when you get to Sacramento***

I'm a teacher so I like to give assignments, so I'm giving you all an assignment. When you go home, write this and then practice it. Say it out loud. Practice it. Try it on your family. Try it on the dog. Try it on the neighborhood cat. Practice it so that by the time you get to Sacramento you put out your hand and you will talk to anyone, a cat, a dog, a senator, a representative, the governor, anyone, because you will practice what you want to say. This gives you the idea but then you practice, and on the bus you will have more chances.

***For representative democracy to work, we must tell our representatives
how we want to be represented***

There is one more thing I want to take a few minutes with. This woman, Phoua, is a genius. Do you know that Phoua is a genius? She should run for office. This genius made you a telephone. We're giving you all a telephone. If you didn't have a cell phone, now you have a cell phone. Everyone gets a cell phone and there is no monthly charge. No one will send you a bill. This is your cell phone. You should use this. It says, "Be an advocate. Call your elected officials." And then she also gave you this. This has the pictures, the address, the local telephone number, not just the long-distance number but the local number if you want to call and leave a message. For example, this week you can call and leave a message for Senator Barbara Boxer or Senator Feinstein in their Fresno office. It does not have to be long distance. You can say to them, "Please vote no on a budget that cuts programs for families and children. You can call Congressman Radanovich if that's your congressman or Congressman Costa or Congressman Nunez and say, "Please vote no on a budget that cuts programs for children and families." If you want you can say, "Don't cut food programs," or "Don't cut healthcare," or whatever you care about. Leave a message for them. They need to hear from you this week. And then, whether you go to Sacramento or not, keep this close to your telephone. Whenever Metro Ministries or any other group says, "We need your voice. Please call your supervisors or your legislators in Sacramento," you have it right here. You can look up your people. If you don't know which ones represent you, Phoua, Carmen, Carolina, Jeremy, Edie, Walt, Ken, and everybody will help. They can all help you find out which ones represent you and you can call them because this does not end today and it does not end just by going to Sacramento. In America we have something called representative democracy. For representative democracy to work we must tell our representatives how we want to be represented. They cannot read our minds. They cannot guess what we want them to do. If we want healthcare for all our children we need to tell them, "Please, if you represent me please vote to have healthcare for all our children." If you want people to have food and not be hungry you have to tell them, "Please, to represent me you need to vote to make sure children will have food, families will have food." If you want clean air you have to tell them how you want them to represent you. They may be very good and smart, but they cannot read your mind. You have to tell them how you wish to be represented. So that's the deal. You have this wonderful book. It's almost like a photo album. It's wonderful! It has their pictures and they're all smiling. Everybody is smiling at you. They want you to like them. Well, tell them how you wish to be represented. That's how you know they know what you need.

Can I tell you one last story? One time a while ago I was feeling very discouraged because it seemed that the people who want to cut the budget and hurt people were so much more powerful. I was complaining to a friend. His name is Jeff. He's an organizer. He likes to organize people to help speak up for low-income people. I started to complain. I said, "Jeff, it's not fair. How come the other side is so rich? How come the other side has so much chance to be in the news all the time? How come the other side seems to be so big and so powerful? It's not fair." And I complained and I whined and he said, "Stop it. Don't you know what a good advocate is?" I should know that, right? I said, "Maybe not." He said, "A good advocate is like the good guys in the old style cowboy movie." You remember the old cowboy movies? There are two good guys. They're running away from the bad guys. They're on their horses and they're going away and they have to go up a steep mountain and there's a cliff at the end but they have to keep going. Oh, it looks hopeless! They're heading for the cliff! Here's the bad news. Down in the valley are the bad guys. They're coming along and they aren't just bad. Even their horses look mean. They're mean and bad and they're coming along and there are a lot of them and they're coming after the good guys. What are the good guys going to do? Bad guys down in the valley. Up here a cliff. Do you think they just give up? "Oh, it's hopeless. I can't do anything. We're all alone, just two of us." No. One of the good guys starts to get some rocks. He starts pounding the rocks together. It echoes down the valley. The other one gets a big stick. He starts whipping up a lot of dust. The bad guys down in the valley hear the noise and see the cloud of dust and they say, "There must be more good guys than we knew," and they turn around and they go the other way and the good guys win. That's what we're going to do. If there are only two of you, one of you makes as much noise as you can and the other one whips up a big cloud of dust, and we're going to beat the bad guys and they're going to turn around and go the other way. Right? Yes!

Every legislator who is in office got there because people voted for them. We have every right to say what we want and what we need to see happen in our communities.

Carmen Arambula: One of the things I want to talk about just really quickly is we talked about going up to Sacramento. Nancy talked a little bit about next month. We're going to have our State Assemblyman Juan Arambula come down to talk to you, so all of the things that you practiced today you can also practice next month. That's going to be April 22, next month. If you go on the trip to Sacramento you can say hi to him when you're up in Sacramento and then see him again later that month. One of the things I want you to think about really quickly is what do you really want to talk to your assemblyman about? What do you want to talk to your legislators about, to your city council? You have all of their pictures in front of you. There is one thing I want for you to notice, too, because it's very different from what's in this room. A lot of the people who have pictures in that booklet are men. How many men do we have in this room? There are about seven. How many women do you think are in this room? Do you want to say that there are about 90 women in this room and maybe about 7 men? If we look at that booklet, how many men are on that piece of paper? There are a whole lot of men. They might be smiling and they're very friendly, but everybody who is on that piece of paper got there because people voted for them. They have a responsibility to answer back to those people. They have a job to do. They get paid to do that job. Whether or not you know it, you as a community are paying them to do that job. They have to answer back to you. What is important to you? What do you want to happen? You are the boss of these people and you have every right to say

what you want and what you need to see happen in your community. I want you to remember that because I think sometimes it's really easy for us to get scared and really nervous about talking to people, but this is one of the few times where you can say, "I'm the boss. I've got the butter. If they want that they need that from me. They've got to answer to me about what I want in my community, what's important to me."

We're going to have two people from each table just say one thing that's really important to them. That can be, "It's important for me to have good food in schools," "It's important for me to have clean air for my kids to breathe," "It's important to me to have health care for everyone," "It's important to me that my work offers health insurance for me and my family and that we can afford to pay for it."

Participant: Good morning. My name is Carolina, and what is important for me and my baby that's coming is for us to live in a healthy place with clean air, clean water, and a good community.

Participant: (Translation) What's really important for her is clean air and to have healthy kids.

Participant: (Translation) She has two children, one of which has health insurance and the other one doesn't. What she really wants is for her family to be covered, to be able to say that both of her kids have health insurance.

Participant: My name is Mai. What's important to me is to have better healthcare for all children and all families.

Participant: We need help for moms that don't have husbands, so we need help to take care of the kids.

Participant: Health insurance for all.

Participant: I'm Dr. Todd, and my hope is that we would learn more and that the government would fund more organic foods and alternative remedies so that if you don't have insurance you know how to heal yourself and your family.

Participant: (Translation) For everyone who is working for different groups or companies, those companies should be providing health insurance for all of their workers and for their families and it should be offered at a price that everyone can pay. She works for a company where it costs too much for her to be able to pay for health insurance for her and her family. If you're working some place for a group or for a company they should provide your health insurance and it should be affordable.

Participant: (Translation) For me it's important that there is a type of health insurance or coverage that's accessible for everyone in the family, so that means that everyone can use it and knows how.

Participant: (Translation) She was agreeing with what other people had said before. She also believes in a type of health insurance for everyone. She gave an example of her husband who has worked at a place for many years, 16 or more, and they've never offered health insurance. To try and pay for that out of your pocket is very hard. What if somebody gets a grave illness or an illness that's really bad? You might be able to pay for a doctor's visit if somebody is sick, but if somebody gets really, really sick what do you do?

Carmen Arambula: The question is how do you pressure these groups to offer health insurance for everyone? One of the ways that we can do that is by telling our legislators we think that companies should offer health insurance. They can pass a bill that says they've got to do that and they can pass a bill putting a cap on how much it will cost. If you really believe in that, when we've got our assemblyman here next month talk to him about that. When you go up to Sacramento talk to people about this. You are all making really good points.

Participant: (Translation) He was saying that the government and our governor need to give more support and more help to our workers, especially workers that are working in the field. There needs to be more rights. A lot of times those are workers that are already discriminated against. People already know that you can lose your job, and so the immigrants here don't really have a lot of rights. He was also saying that he feels like our governor doesn't really support or help our immigrants, and that needs to happen. The last point that he made was that we also need to give more help and support to our elderly and to our young kids who are really sick.

Carmen Arambula: One of the things that I want to say in comment to that is our governor, Arnold Schwarzenegger, is an immigrant. He was not born here in the United States. He was born in another country, so as immigrants or as a population or a community that lives with a lot of immigrants we can say we deserve rights, and that's something that he as an immigrant needs to know and understand. He needs to know how to support us and what we need.

Participant: (Translation) We need to take care of our kids by providing healthy food, by providing medicines for them, and a type of health insurance that can cover those costs, so really taking care of our kids with the right types of food and medicine and healthcare that they can all access.

Participant: (Translation) She was talking about education and our education system and making sure that we're providing good education to all kids because these kids are going to be our future and we've got to make sure that we're providing good education in schools and our kids are learning how to read, how to write, and how to do the basic things.

Carmen Arambula: Thank you so much for coming. We really appreciate it. We know it's your first day back from vacation, so we're really glad that you came to see us. We're so excited that you got to hear from Nancy. We're excited about the next couple of trips that we're going to be taking up to Sacramento. Next month we have to be sure that we're here on time and that we start right away. Juan Arambula is only going to be here from 9 o'clock to 9:50. After that, the people from his Fresno office will come down and talk to you so that you'll have a chance to meet them, too. Thanks for coming. We'll see you next month.