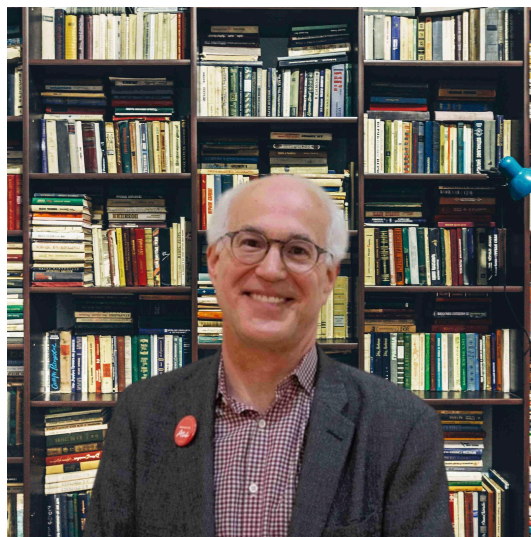


What the New UCLA Report Reveals About California Single Payer

Featuring

Michael Lighty

President, Healthy California Now



This time on Code WACK!

California has debated a single payer healthcare system for decades, but [a new UCLA report](#) commissioned by the California Health and Human Services Agency under [Senate Bill 770](#) could reshape the conversation.

In this episode, **Michael Lighty**, president of [Healthy California Now](#), explains how **the report moves the debate from cost to equity**.

This is the second of [two episodes](#) with Michael Lighty.

Check out the Transcript and Show Notes for more!

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WE DISCUSS

Multiple reports going back decades have focused on the cost of single payer health care. Some reports say the state would save

billions of dollars, and others say it would cost billions of dollars. How does this UCLA report change the conversation? Is cost really the only major consideration?

Lighty: ... overall, the report validates what we know, which is that single payer is a superior policy to provide people with the healthcare they need at a lower cost.

...We have an affordability crisis And frankly, no policy other than single payer actually addresses that. Because the Affordable Care Act solution is, sure, *'we'll just throw more taxpayer subsidies so you can afford this ever more costly product called health insurance.'* Well, that's not exactly a solution.

...the report does spend a lot of time on equity. And equity is the Achilles heel of the current system because there is no way a commercial insurance-based system and all this fragmentation of coverage and differences in financing and differences in access and treatments can provide equity. It cannot inherently provide equity. And equity, and the equity argument does come through in the report, and that is new - as you say - new ammo for our fight.

But you take the cost crisis in healthcare, and you take the equity crisis in healthcare, and the only solution is single payer.

Helpful Links

[Report examines important considerations for a unified health care financing plan in California](#), *UCLA Center for Health Policy Research's Health Economics and Evaluation Research (2026)*

[Key Design Considerations for a Unified Health Care Financing System in California](#), *Healthy California for All Commission, April 2022.*

[An Environmental Analysis of Health Care Delivery, Coverage, and Financing in California](#), *Healthy California for All Commission, August 2020.*

[Economic Analysis of the Healthy California Single-Payer Health Care Proposal \(SB-562\)](#), *Political Economy Research Institute, May 2017*

[Healthy California Now](#)

[Michael Lighty](#), *The Sanders Institute*

[SB770, Guaranteed Health Care](#)

Episode Transcript

Read the [episode transcript](#).

Guest Biography - Michael Lighty

Michael Lighty, President, [Healthy California Now](#), has organized, advocated and developed policy for single-payer, Medicare for All nationally and in California for over 30 years.

He is a founding Fellow of the [Sanders Institute](#), and he was the Healthcare Constituency Director for Bernie 2020. He is a consultant for the National Union of Healthcare Workers.

Most recently, he co-wrote and was a leader in the successful campaign to enact CA SB 770. He worked for 25 years for the California Nurses Association/ National Nurses United, including as the director of public policy.

Host Biography: Brenda Gazzar

Brenda Gazzar, the host and co-producer of **Code WACK!**, has produced over 300 weekly podcast episodes, topping 400,000 downloads. A skilled interviewer and storyteller, Brenda brings nuance, curiosity, and clarity to every conversation.

Brenda has worked as a multilingual and award-winning reporter with more than two decades of experience in California and the Middle East.

Her work has been published by Reuters, Ms. Magazine, USA Today, Los Angeles Daily News, the Orange County Register, The Wrap, The Jerusalem Post, Cairo Times, and numerous other publications. She speaks Spanish, Hebrew, and moderate Arabic and is the recipient of national, state, and regional awards.

Brenda also enjoys being a life coach, helping people align with their purpose so they feel fulfilled while achieving their boldest dreams. Brenda's work is grounded in a belief that systemic change and personal growth go hand in hand — and she's here for both.

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