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## Socialized Medicine Gets Court Approval in San Francisco

The Golden Gate Restaurant Association (GGRA), a non-profit trade association, asked the court to reject the requirement placed on businesses. In an attempt to persuade the U.S. District Court, a motion filed by the GGRA alleges that this ordinance violates existing federal law. "GGRA strongly supports expanding health care coverage for all San Franciscans, but we need a reasonable plan that doesn't run afoul of federal laws and doesn't place an unfair financial burden on employers," GGRA Executive Director Kevin Westlye said. "Not only does the City's law violate federal statutes, but the onerous cost it imposes will hurt many small businesses and damage our local economy."



According to GGRA, the required payments by employers violates the 1974 federal law that forbids state and local governments from regulating employee benefits plans. "It is illegal for individual municipalities to mandate that employers pay for health insurance," Westlye said. "Health care is everyone's responsibility, not just the employers. We proposed several funding mechanisms for universal health care. All were rejected and in there place is a punitive system where one group pays — the employer."

Rather than a law penalizing industry, Westlye recommends another unconstitutional law — universal healthcare — in its place. Those favoring universal healthcare argue that a true universal healthcare program would be funded from all taxpayers across the board, without apparent extra penalty for business. In reality, the money siphoned out of the economy to finance national healthcare would harm the entire economy. But the San Francisco case has been cited as improving Governor Schwarzenegger's chances of creating a state-wide universal healthcare plan. "I think this case strengthens the governor's case for having a shared responsibility" for health insurance coverage that includes employers, claimed Daniel Zingale, a senior advisor to Schwarzenegger.



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