FOLLOW-UP TO OUR EVENING DISCUSSION:
More information about Physicians for a National Health Program and Health Care for All – Washington.
The first place to go looking is at the websites:

- Physicians for a National Health Program (www.pnhp.org) is a national organization founded about 25 years ago to advocate for a national health insurance plan like Canada’s. While PNHP’s main aim is to mobilize physicians and other health care providers in support of a national single-payer health coverage scheme, it welcomes anyone who wishes to contribute as members. PNHP currently has about 18,000 members across the U.S.

- The Western Washington Chapter of PNHP has its own website (www.pnhpwesternwashington.org). Our chapter has about 400 members, most of whom are busy physicians and don’t attend meetings much. That said, we do have monthly meetings on the 3rd Wednesdays at 7 pm in the auditorium under the cafeteria at Swedish Hospital Cherry Hill Campus (the former Providence Hospital). The meetings usually feature an interesting speaker, and are definitely worth checking out. (The next meeting will be on June 20, 2012.) PNHPWW also puts on an Annual Public Meeting, usually in late winter. This year it was on March 3, and Amy Goodman was the featured speaker. Kane Hall was packed with over 700 people!

- Health Care for All – Washington has been in existence in one form or another for almost 20 years. Its website is: www.healthcareforallwa.org. While the organization started with a group of physicians advocating for a single-payer national health insurance program, like PNHP, it has always had many members from the general public. In 1998, the group changed its name to Health Care 2000, and wrote a bill that would create a Washington Health Security Trust (WHST) that would become a single-payer entity that could provide health coverage all residents of our state. We ran an unsuccessful initiative campaign in 2000, and since then have worked with committed legislators to introduce the bill in every legislative session since 2003. HCFA-WA publishes a quarterly newsletter, available for reading on the website, or you can subscribe to a print version if you prefer. HCFA-WA is also organizing area Action Teams to meet regularly and work on community education and recruitment. We host an Annual Meeting, usually in November, in Seattle. In 2011, we had speakers from the Mad As Hell Doctors from Oregon and a single-payer physician advocate via Skype from Hawaii.

Looking at the current political climate and the continued deterioration in access and affordability in health care, both Western Washington Chapter of PNHP (www.pnhpwesternwashington.org) and Health Care for All – Washington (www.healthcareforallwa.org) recognize that a massive public movement is going to be necessary to overcome the firm grip that those who profit greatly from our current health care non-system have on our political process. Imagine the effect if millions showed up
in Washington DC demanding national health coverage for everyone residing in the U.S.! Or, for that matter, several thousand massing in Olympia demanding a state universal coverage system like the WHST.

Both organizations are working on what to say once the Supreme Court announces its decision about the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA). Both are also exploring emphasizing the human rights/social responsibility aspect of universal national health coverage. It's striking that every other industrialized nation treats health care as a social responsibility that the government organizes. Even developing nations, as they become wealthy enough to afford it, establish national universal coverage. We in the U.S. are the outliers, but a campaign emphasizing this aspect of health care might bring about a change in our attitude.

This is where YOU come in! Investigate these organizations, then decide how (not whether!) you want to join in.

**ALSO:**
A very good resource for information about health care reform in the US is the Kaiser Family Foundation website, especially the primer, "Health Reform Hits Wall Street," at http://healthreform.kff.org/