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## Contra Costa faith group to host health care summit watch party

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A Contra Costa-based faith group will participate in a nationwide "watch party" Thursday of President Barack Obama's health care summit.

The Contra Costa Interfaith Supporting Community Organization, an alliance of 25 congregations in Contra Costa County, will use the gathering as part of its push for passage of reform that would make health insurance more affordable and accessible.

Obama released his health care proposal Monday as the starting point for the bipartisan, televised health care summit.

But its bipartisan support is highly uncertain.

Republicans immediately blasted the president's proposal and have argued for weeks that Obama should start the health care debate from scratch at the summit. The GOP views the Democrats' approach as a publicly unpopular government takeover of the health insurance system.

The local watch party begins at 7 p.m. at 724 Ferry St. in Martinez.

The Contra Costa faith alliance favors the Democrats' health care reform package and has been lobbying for passage with local members of Congress.

Its leaders arranged a health care town hall with Rep. George Miller, D-Martinez, who participated in a nationwide conference call with Obama and lobbied U.S. Sens. Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein,

The local coalition is affiliated with the PICO National Network, an alliance of 1,000 congregations, 53 faith-based community organizations in 17 states representing nearly 1 million

families.

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