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Department of Justice Files Suit to Prevent Anthem-Cigna and Aetna-Humana Mergers

This morning, Attorney General Loretta Lynch announced that the Department of Justice (DOJ) will sue to block two proposed mergers of health insurance companies: Anthem's acquisition of Cigna and Aetna's acquisition of Humana. The DOJ made this decision on the grounds that these mergers will shrink the "big five" health insurers to just three, which will reduce competition and harm consumers through reduced quality and affordability.

"UHCAN Ohio applauds the DOJ for recognizing the significant harm that would come to health care consumers if these two mergers had gone forward," said Steve Wagner, Executive Director of UHCAN Ohio.

According to the DOJ, the decreased competition among health insurers that would be the outcome of these mergers would reduce choice and increase costs for employers providing coverage for their employees, consumers shopping for insurance through the Marketplace, and seniors enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans. With insurance rates in Ohio already among the [highest in the country](#), decreased competition among insurers would only [make matters worse](#).

UHCAN Ohio has been particularly concerned about the Aetna-Humana merger, which Ohio's Insurance Commissioner approved on May 10, 2016 without notice to those who filed comments and the public. In February, UHCAN Ohio had [called on](#) the Ohio Department of Insurance to hold hearings on the two mergers in order to evaluate the impact on Ohio consumers. A hearing was not convened and the Insurance Commissioner's two-page decision did not address any of the issues raised by consumers.

"We are glad the DOJ provided a full review of the mergers and is acting in consumers' interest. We urge the Ohio Department of Insurance to provide transparency on issues that affect consumers and to assure a hearing on the Anthem-Cigna merger on which it has not yet ruled. This is essential to protect Ohio consumers from insurance company actions that increase their profits at the expense of quality and affordability," said Wagner.

UHCAN Ohio is a statewide non-partisan, non-profit organization building the voice of consumers to achieve quality, affordable, accessible health coverage for all Ohioans. www.uhcanohio.org

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