

Rebecca Buck

From: Adam J. Sorscher <Adam.J.Sorscher@hitchcock.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 08, 2018 10:48 AM
To: Rebecca Buck
Subject: S53

Dear Ms. Buck:

I request that the following letter be submitted to the Senate Appropriations Committee as testimony:

I am a primary care physician who resides in Fairlee, VT and practices in Lebanon, NH and also at the Good Neighbor (free) medical clinic in White River Junction, VT. About 40% of my patients live in Vermont. I implore you to pass S53 to provide primary care to all Vermonters.

I have heard that some detractors to the bill claim that high percentages of Vermonters already have medical insurance and a state-sponsored plan is therefore unnecessary. While it may be true that rates of uninsured are low, I can assure you that large numbers of Vermonters routinely forego basic health care because of costs. Most of them have insurance but ration their own health care because of co-pays, deductibles, and ever increasing percentages of the bill not covered by insurance. I have read that unpaid medical bills, nationwide, remain a leading cause of home foreclosures and bankruptcy, even among people with health insurance.

I treat many people who have common chronic conditions such as diabetes, depression, and chronic pain. These patients incur costs for check ups with me, testing and medications. In total, the bills that they are asked to pay can exceed their means and cause them to lapse in their care.

Just today, I saw two patients who would benefit from universal primary care. One is a middle aged woman who has diabetes and is doing well. But the co pays for her medical care are a constant source of stress and contribute to financial insecurity. She expressed to me that she really isn't sure that she is making the right choice to stay on her regimen. This is terribly unfair for someone who is working hard to maintain her health.

I also saw a 28 year old man who is self employed as a logger but has shoulder pain that is making it difficult for him to work. He chooses to remain uninsured because of the cost of premiums for insurance policies even with subsidies from the Affordable Care Act. Presently, he is deciding whether to live with the pain or pay for physical therapy to rehab his shoulder. Shouldn't our government help such a person – not only to relieve their suffering but also so that they can be productive in their work?

An investment in primary care is a good value. It is morally the right thing to do since we all deserve basic health services and access to a trusted primary care provider when we feel vulnerable about our health.
Please support S53!

Sincerely,

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