

S. 53 testimony 4/5/17

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I've been a primary care pediatrician since 1976 in E. Franklin County. The kids I cared for were either uninsured, barely insured, or had Medicaid (the best insurance – a single payer – that any kid could have.) I bartered for health care – firewood, eggs, knitted afghans. My income was so low that other PCPs would not consider practicing there. Now that barrier is even greater with the mountain of debt new graduates have to carry. We need to encourage PCPs, especially young PCPs, to practice in rural underserved areas – a single payer, budgetary approach will allow for higher compensation to practitioners who practice in these areas – a kind of leveling of the playing field between rural and urban medical practices. Medical care is not a free market – health care is not a commodity. “Health insurance” is not the same as “health care.”

In my years of pediatric practice it is so clear to me that healthy families depend on healthy parents and healthy children.

Administrative costs are unnecessarily large. Almost 1/3 of medical care costs nationwide are administrative – costs that have nothing to do with providing care – an unnecessary third party between PCPs and their patients. Coding, billing, collecting debts – the unfair and often cruel commerce of medicine. I take care of families who are woefully under-insured who have to make decisions about food vs. medical care for themselves and their children.

At a recent town meeting in Middlebury I held up a 40 foot long computer printout of all the insurance companies my office billed over the years in my practice. More than 200. These insurance companies provided NO care for my patients.

I have a masters degree in public health. It has been well demonstrated that a small investment in preventive care and early treatment more than pays for itself and prevents costly ER and hospital care.

Global services should include: physical or mental conditions, substance abuse treatment, chronic care management, preventive care wellness services, dental care.

BASIC PREMISE: We should begin from the premise that health care is a human right. If we begin with this premise of universal coverage and equal access to care, like every other developed country in the world, then we can proceed with innovative fiscal strategies, such as Universal Primary Care Financing – a single payer for primary care – not unlike our most successful medical care program – Medicare.

“You can always count on Americans to do the right thing - after they've tried everything else.” - Winston Churchill