

Dear Esteemed Committee,

I'm writing to express my support of H.B. 440 in the 132nd General Assembly to provide universal health care coverage to all Ohioans. As I'm sure you're aware, universal health care is supported by the vast majority of Americans. I'm sure you're also aware that health care costs are huge drivers of financial trouble in retirement and for many families working to meet their families' daily needs. Health care costs have become so burdensome; I personally know some families who are making six figures, yet struggling with payment arrangements made to hospitals. People get sick. People are born with disorders they didn't ask for. We must end the struggle for Ohioans as a state, if our Federal government does not have the will to do it at this time.

My beautiful nine month-old was born with cardiology and other medical issues. This was not something that could have been prevented—it happened. My employer sponsored plan has an \$11,000 annual family deductible. My son's issues and treatment will require a lifetime of various follow-ups and other care. Despite my son's issues, because of the great care he has received, he is a cheerful, chubby, thriving little boy. Yet, I worry about the point that the medical debt will crush us, hindering retirement, education and other savings, and basic living expenses too. I certainly can't afford to pay \$11,000 a year for medical care *in addition* to premiums.

The current for-profit system is inadequate and it is bankrupting Ohioans. This legislature cannot, at the same time it brings forward bills to effectively ban abortion, when genetic orders can't be detected until well after 9 weeks, even with early non-invasive testing, and then say that those born, along with their families, must endure the ball and chain that is never-ending medical debt. Employers need to be out of the health insurance business and Ohio can do the right thing for its citizens.

Thank you for your time.

Regards,

Dasaya Cates

Blacklick