

Dear Ohio Representatives:

My name is Elizabeth Botts, and I am a pediatric nurse practitioner in Kettering, Ohio. I have been a supporter of single payer health care for the past 10 years. My passion for the topic started as a child from a self-employed family, strengthened studying public health in Copenhagen, Denmark, and climaxed as a medical provider.

My dad is one of the hardest workers I know. He was a team leader at Huffy Bicycles, but shortly before I was born, he decided to open his own design firm. Our financial stability fluctuated throughout my childhood, but health insurance was always a concern, and it has only worsened in recent years. Fortunately, I am now employed, and my sister is finishing up graduate school. I am able to obtain health insurance from my employer, and my sister is able to temporarily receive state assistance from Indiana due to her low income. My parents, however, are still counting down the days until they can join Medicare. I am so blessed and grateful that they are healthy. I cannot imagine if they were not. Health insurance simply would not be an option.

As a senior in college, I decided to study public health during my semester abroad in Copenhagen. I knew I was pre-med, but I figured "Science was Science." I wanted to study a topic where I would gain a different perspective abroad. I honestly learned more living in Denmark, than I did from my studies. I learned that health care coverage was not the topic of conversation it was at my family's dinner table. If you were sick, you went to the doctor. It did not cause undue financial stress. It was not a hotly debated topic like it is in the United States. And although, the western influence of a private market was threatening the public system, in 2011 at least, Denmark took care of its citizens.

Finally, and a topic I could go on about for hours, are my current patients. Not a day goes by where I do not feel for my self-pay patients, my state-funded patients, and my private-patients. My self-pay patients avoid the doctor at all costs and when they do come, they pay the highest prices of anyone. My state-funded patients have extreme difficulty getting into specialists because the reimbursement is poor. My private-patients have the negotiating support of their insurance company, but unless an exorbitant several-thousand dollar deductible is met, they are paying for every penny of their health care. I will leave you with this. I had two prior state-funded patients summarize the problem with our health-care system:

- 1) One family with Caresource insurance was temporarily switched to Anthem or United (I cannot remember which). I needed to order a series of tests, along with some specialist referrals. The family asked me to wait until "they received their insurance back." Their private plan was so bare, that it did not qualify as insurance in this family's mind.
- 2) Another family with prior Caresource insurance, moved into a private plan when mom was fortunate enough to receive a salaried-position with benefits. This mom was in disbelief at how little her new plan covered. She asked me how she can get a better insurance plan. Do you know what the answer was? She would have to quit her job, so

that the family could qualify for Caresource again. How is this a good way to run our country? How does this encourage people to better their lives? The middle class makes too much to qualify for state insurance, but not enough to survive the deductibles of private plans.

I strongly encourage all of you to keep an open mind. Most countries around the world use some type of single payer model, and their health outcomes surpass those of Americans. This can be a bipartisan bill if presented correctly. Americans are looking for a lower cost, more efficacious health care system. Single payer is the way to go.

Thank you!

Elizabeth Botts, APRN