My name is Dennis Slotnick, Region 2 coordinator for SPAN Ohio.

Members of the insurance and finance committee, and chairman Brinkman. Thank you for holding this essential proponent testimony and double thank you for extending the testimony from last week to today to allow more presenters.

I have been active with Universal Health care campaign for nearly 20 years. As a SPAN coordinator who collects health care stories, I have been told many stories in confidence to the teller.

This morning I speak for those who cannot speak. Some are no longer living… 30,000 Americans a year die of treatable, preventable ailments because they lack health care. Some are too old or ill to travel today. Many are caught in undesired employment just because offers health care, or are working two and three jobs just to pay medical bills. Others are too embarrassed to publicly make testimony of their bankruptcy status or compromised health. I speak today on behalf of these.

While gathering her signature, a lady quietly said to me “I wish this bill would pass. Our family has gone through three bankruptcies because my husband needed heart bypass surgery that was not covered by his insurance. Good luck.” she said. She was holding back her tears.

Another lady age 43 wishes she could have children and a family. As a film maker and producer. She was not able to get or afford health insurance. After enduring abdominal pains and putting off seeing a doctor, she was diagnosed with ovarian fibrosis and needed 23 baseball sized cysts removed with her hysterectomy. This sad situation could have been prevented with Medicare for all.

One employable young man, like many I know, is 26 years old. He lives in Fremont Ohio and requires medication to manage his epilepsy. He is currently on Medicaid and has turned down many good jobs because they do not provide health care. He has turned down these lower paying jobs because higher income means he loses Medicaid. He is caught.

Bob Pesek and his wife live in Maumee, Ohio. His wife, Chris was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease. He was let go from University employment during downsizing at age 57. A sudden brain aneurism left him visually impaired. He fell into the donut hole of no coverage before Medicare, no fault of his own. The couple choose to move to Costa Rica for medical care until age 65.

These serious problems can be solved just as they are in nearly all other countries in the world. A single payer, universal health care system covers everyone and relieves the financial burdens.

Thank you again for your attention.

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