

Good afternoon: My name is Adam Graber and I live in Arapahoe County. Even though I'm only 31 years old, I've already seen the devastating impact that the healthcare system has had on Colorado families. I'm here today to testify in support of house bill 1273 because as someone who has worked in lending, I strongly believe that a publicly financed healthcare system would prevent the financial ruin that so many Colorado families now face because of our broken healthcare system.

I worked in lending sales and management for seven years, and currently work in marketing for a local home healthcare agency. In lending I witnessed daily the disastrous effects of the healthcare insurance industry on working-class Coloradans. I saw peoples savings accounts depleted, their 401k loans maxed, their credit destroyed, and their homes mortgaged due to high healthcare costs. I would say that 90% or more of these people who came to me for help did have health insurance. Of Americans forced into medically related bankruptcy, nearly 75 percent had health insurance at the start of their illness. We're better than this!

I'm in great health and I have no pre-existing conditions, very rare doctor visits, and so on. I have cost the system little to no money in my lifetime. Yet when I needed Blue Cross and Blue Shield to come through for me two years ago after spraining my hand skiing they let me down! I went to the Breckenridge ER clinic where I was told that all costs had to be paid and then everything would be submitted to my insurance company. I was responsible only for a \$75 ER co-pay and incurred \$608 in costs over two hours by seeing the doctor, taking an x-ray, and getting a splint for the sprain. I had to call bi-weekly for 9 months to get my \$533 back! I was struggling financially and would not allow them to pocket my hard-earned money. Most people would not fight for nine months for \$533, but it became more about the principal to me than the money. \$533 may not seem like a

lot, but it could make the difference between making rent for an average Colorado family or facing eviction. This level of service is unacceptable, and we're better than this! One of my clients was a guy named Tim who I worked with a couple of times during my career. He is self-employed, owns a home, has a wife and two kids, and everything was going well for him. When I tried to help him obtain a mortgage loan I was unable to due to his low credit rating. Tim had suffered from a heart attack and was forced to sell many of his business assets, and deplete his kid's college savings accounts to deal with medical bills. He did his very best and did avoid foreclosure and bankruptcy, but the costs to his business, his credit, and to his family were severe! We're better than this!

We have the ability today in Colorado to set the stage for the rest of the country on this issue as we have on so many others. I ask for you to vote today to support House Bill 1273. Thank you