

Testimony

My name is Liam Sperl, I am 24 years old, and I plan on attending medical school in the fall. I am here to express my strong and unwavering support for House Bill 1273 and the single-payer system as a solution for our health care woes. I am here on the behalf of those aspiring to become physicians, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants. I am here on the behalf of those who are considering a career in primary care.

As an aspiring primary care physician myself, I am afraid to enter this currently broken, patch-worked, and backwards system. I currently serve with the Community HealthCorps at a Community Health Clinic in Commerce City and I see the daily struggles of the uninsured and the underinsured. Every day I see the lives that our system puts at risk because we refuse to provide a basic human right, because our system focuses on money instead of people, because it is currently the norm to profit from the sick. The doctors and midlevels that I work with are constantly caught up in red tape set forth by health insurance companies. They are in a never ending battle to get the care their patients need to survive.

Studies prove that primary care saves money and saves lives. As a nation, we currently have a third of our doctors in primary care – 40% of those are over the age of 55. The amount of medical students entering the profession currently amounts to 2% – because of this systemic bureaucracy set forth by multi-payers. This relationship of retiring doctors and a lack of young doctors to replace them will prove disastrous for the nation.

No one wants to spend the time and make the sacrifices to study medicine to finally enter a practice where jumping through insurance hoops is a daily routine. Half of primary care physicians consider leaving medicine due to the mounting weight of red tape. Primary care is seen as a negative and hostile environment by medical students and aspiring physicians because of the health insurance industry.

If you see a need for primary care doctors in Colorado and in the nation, you need to pass this bill. House Bill 1273 has as a required element the provision of support for health care provider education and training that effectively addresses primary care, nursing and other provider shortages. The bill recognizes the importance of a medical home to control costs and can set incentives to facilitate this occurring.

You need to establish a single-payer system that allows doctors to practice medicine. We need to restore the draw for medical students to a long forsaken field. I strongly implore you pass House Bill 1273 and beg you to establish a single-payer in Colorado. The health and life of the citizens of our great state truly need a rational healthcare reimbursement system.