

I strongly support universal healthcare for all. It is the most cost effective way for the entire community to receive quality healthcare in a timely fashion that would reduce the overall burden on society by reducing health issues going unaddressed, which leads to worse health-related outcomes and higher expenditures.

Insurers are middlemen driving up costs putting healthcare out of reach or creating psychological barriers keeping people from investing in their health because they're already overwhelmed by spending so much in premiums.

In my own experience, I've avoided going to the doctor when I've needed to, even though I have insurance. I had an accident 10 years ago that damaged the cartilage in my knee. Once my insurance stopped covering my physical therapy appointments I was cut loose to fend for myself even though my knee was not fully healed. I did the best I could to get well, but without the guidance of professionals my knee got worse and has led to dysfunctions in other parts of my body. I've been hobbling through work just to get by and have been able to afford additional physical therapy visits on occasion. And when I do, my knee improves. But I can't afford consistent visits to keep up the momentum to restore myself to a more stable condition, and my deductible is so high that my insurance never kicks in. Improvement in my condition feel like it's in reach but the expense of consistent care keeps it prohibitive.

For this reason, my knee issues have gone on far longer than was probably necessary. This ongoing issue has not only affected me personally by reducing my ability to work and leading to increased occurrences of depression and hopelessness, but it has also robbed the community in a once much more active individual who used to participate in many more community events and who used to spend much more money in the community when he had a higher income.

My job is very specialized and requires that I be on my feet walking and carrying equipment for many hours. But I can't take on the same amount of work as I used to because my knee requires recuperation between jobs. This reduces the financial ability that I once had to patronize the community's businesses.

There are so many people in our community who have marginal health issues like myself, who can't get fully healthy due to healthcare costs even though improvement is very achievable. Many of us just getting by keeping our heads above water while our conditions just slowly spiral without the help we need.

That's not to mention all of those who have much worse conditions and have become financially devastated.

Communities that are unhealthy generate less wealth. It benefits everyone by investing in the health of individuals in the community. The more active, healthy people you have in a community, the stronger you make the economy. Healthy people have more money to spend. We need to think of universal healthcare as a community investment in each other, so that we're as healthy as we can be to maximize our community participation, which is good for mental and physical health, interpersonal connections, and financial stability, not just for individuals but for the entire community.

Creating the governance board and tasking it with creating a plan to achieve universal healthcare is the next step in our best chance at finally making this much need change in how we view healthcare and taking care of each other to benefit all.

Let's get it done!

– Kyle Carnes