

# End Point

## Small Business Owner Statement in Support of the NY Health Act

Esteemed panel members, thank you for allowing me to speak here today.

My name is Ben Goldstein. I'm President of End Point Corporation. I'm a small business owner. I co-founded my tech consulting company 24 years ago. Our headquarters is in the Flatiron District. We're experts with e-commerce, database systems, IT infrastructure, and immersive mapping systems. Check us out: [www.endpoint.com](http://www.endpoint.com). We have 30 FT US employees; 10 of us are in NYS. We also have 15 people working for us internationally.

First off, I want to say that I care about universal health care because I'm a civilized person who believes everyone should have good healthcare. But common decency aside, as a business owner and entrepreneur, healthcare costs are a big bottom-line issue for me. I have to be concerned about the healthcare of my company's employees because health insurance premiums are a major part of their compensation. **The current system is horribly dysfunctional.** It's grossly inefficient, very costly, and we don't get anywhere near our money's worth. On top of this baseline dysfunction, there's also something particularly nasty for small businesses with the status quo. Small businesses are seriously handicapped because we're charged higher premiums than big businesses are for equivalent policies.

Given my company's size, we're not actually required by law to provide health insurance for our employees, but in our industry we wouldn't be in business for long if we didn't. End Point's workforce consists almost entirely of IT professionals. We do challenging work that requires a high level of expertise, and experience matters. I hope it's abundantly obvious: attracting and retaining good employees with the expertise and experience we need is fundamental to our success. The fact that large employers, both private and public, can more cost-effectively provide health insurance benefits means we are at a competitive disadvantage.

Furthermore, as a small business owner, unfortunately, I have to waste hours upon hours dealing with health insurance issues that have absolutely nothing to do with the work I really need to get done. Every year leading up to the annual health insurance renewal time we get notices about how the premiums for the next year will be going up well beyond the rate of inflation—often by double-digit percentages. We're then forced to do some high-stakes shopping for health insurance plans with fine print that goes on and on. Panelists, this is madness. In the end, we typically select what appear to be similar policies to those we had before, only now with bigger deductibles and larger co-pays. But still the premium increases outstrip inflation. Last year our family policies cost almost \$25,500—and this was for an in-network-only policy with a \$5,000 deductible, substantial co-pays for each visit to a provider, and an out of pocket cap of more than \$14,000.

I'm not a bit ashamed to admit it: a big reason I'm in favor of the NY Health Act, is purely selfish. It would be great for my small business. Not only would it help control our healthcare costs, but it would even the playing field for us. What my small business would pay for healthcare would be the same as what big businesses pay. We'd reinvest the money we'd save in R&D to help grow our business. I'm also thrilled at the prospect of eliminating a whole category of completely useless work from my workload. If I never have to analyze another opaque health insurance plan again in my life, that will be soon enough for me! And multiplying this out across all the businesses in our state, this could only be good for our overall economy. Does NYS truly care about small businesses? If so, then we need to prove it. We need to figure out the details and pass the NY Health Act.

There is one more important thing I want to touch on very quickly:

Yes, my company hires people internationally. The uneven playing field for small vs. large businesses with respect to the costs of healthcare applies even more so in the labor market internationally for us as Americans. I get to see this first-hand. Our terribly inefficient healthcare system makes employing Americans far less cost-effective than it should be. How can we compete with this albatross around our necks?

Panel members, once again, I want to thank you for your time today. You have an enormously important job. Please get us a NY Health Act that works for everybody, including small businesses.

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