

## New York Health Act

Testimony by Rebecca Street ~ October 23, 2019

My name is Rebecca Street. For my time I would like to address the importance of the New York Health Act as it relates to artists.

I am an actor and a member of the Screen Actors Guild and Actors Equity Association. I feel blessed to be a union member ~ I have a good pension and relatively speaking quality health care. Even so, two years ago I had to spend \$22,000 out of pocket for dental work under my union covered dental plan ~ this was money I could ill afford. And I remember when my children were young and my earnings did not meet the SAG requirement for health care one quarter, we lost coverage for 3 scary months. And yet, I am one of the lucky ones. I can't imagine what it is like for those who have bad or no health insurance at all. Too many of my sisters and brothers who are artists never make enough to earn health care. For them, the failed insurance programs with their high deductibles and co-pays make many have to abandon their work or live in fear. Surely earnings should not be what dictates whether one human being has access to decent health care and another does not. Surely, for all of us health care is a basic human right allowing us to live with dignity and security ~ regardless of the amount of money we have in the bank.

I love New York ~ I believe it's a great state. And I believe New York can make history by being the first state to pass Single Payer reform. We can lead the way to saying NO MORE to the egregious suffering and massive injustice caused to those who can't afford this basic human right. Thank you. And when the bill is passed, I know the artists of New York will thank you too!

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