

To the State Legislature of New York,

Health care is an issue that affects every single person in Monroe County. The other week I cared for a little girl in clinic whose performance in school had dramatically worsened since the divorce of her parents. She was acting out in class, she wasn't able to do her work, and she was failing her exams. Her anxiety over the issue had become debilitating. Her pediatrician, teacher, and father were all on the same page: this girl needed to go to therapy. The problem? Despite being insured, her single father, who worked a full-time job, couldn't afford the deductible. The problems our for-profit health care system imposes on our working poor and middle class are damning, and we often talk about this problem as if the children of those families somehow avoid any harm, despite being covered by the same insurance plan as the rest of their family. As someone who works at clinics in Rochester, I can tell you firsthand that our children are directly harmed by the for-profit actors in our system. This is just one example of that.

It covers every New Yorker with no deductible and no copay, because we know these just get in the way of making our people healthy. It allows us health care providers to get back to the work of caring for our patients and away from aggressively arguing on the phone with for-profit health insurance companies over why a particular medication is indicated for a patient, even if it cuts into their profits.

Furthermore, once we remove the for-profit health insurance companies from the system, both the people of New York and Monroe County will come out ahead: it's estimated by the nonpartisan Rand Corporation that 95% of New Yorkers will save money once the New York Health Act passes. Property taxes in Monroe County will go down by 56%, equal to the portion we currently pay in to Medicaid. Only the very wealthy will see their taxes go up.

Lincoln once told us, right here in the state of New York, that we must "have faith that right makes might, and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty." I believe that you have the duty to pass the New York Health Act. Be courageous, and do what is right for your people. My patients are counting on you.

Sincerely,  
Mike Sportiello  
Rochester Campaign for New York Health