

Cathy Middlesworth, Syracuse - Rochester draft

My name is Cathy and I live in Syracuse.

My father was a WWII veteran so growing up I had guaranteed healthcare through the VA. By the time I was grown up and had my own kids, we didn't have insurance and there was no such thing as Child Health Plus. I finally paid off the bills from my son's by birth when he was 28 years old. I finally got health insurance when I was married 11 years ago. But no woman should be obligated to marry just so that she can afford to medical care. I am diabetic and struggle to afford insulin even though every month, 30% of my husband's paycheck goes to Blue Cross Blue Shield.

In May, I attended a forum on the New York Health Act hosted by Senator Anotonacci in Syracuse. Most of the speakers were from private insurance companies and trying to scare us by saying that New York Health would increase our taxes. But what they didn't say is that most of us, working class New Yorkers, would be paying less for healthcare and that taxes would only increase on those who are better off, those making over \$400,000 a year and people who make their money from investments rather than work, people who can afford to pay higher taxes. My husband is already paying 30% of his check to health insurance which still requires us to pay out of pocket deductibles and copays, we would rather pay a tax and know our medical needs will be met without forcing us to pay more than we can afford.

There's a lot of people like me. Go down my street and ask anyone if they would call and ambulance or call a doctor. They all have insurance but they can't afford the deductibles. I can't afford to go to the doctor and none of my friends can. Insurance companies get our money every month but we still can't get the healthcare we need. It shouldn't be this way. Healthcare should be guaranteed and there shouldn't be private insurance companies involved in the healthcare system, rationing our access and limiting our choices of doctors. That's why I support the New York Health and want to see our elected officials to fight to make universal healthcare a reality.