



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY
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Representing the Past, Present & Future

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OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IS BROKEN

AND WE CAN NO LONGER AFFORD TO LET IT BE

BY CARL DOOLITTLE, VICE PRESIDENT

Remember the Harry and Louise commercials sponsored by the health insurance industry when the Clinton administration tried to find a solution to our failing health care system? One said to the other, "You don't want the government making your health care decisions for you, do you?"

Fast forward about 15 years to now. Are you better off now with the decisions being made by the insurance companies? Are you happy with the changes to your health care? Have the insurance company accountants, claims managers, CEO's, etc. made the health care decisions that have been in your best interest? Or have they made the decisions in the best interest of their financial bottom line regardless of whom they hurt?

Our country, one of the richest in the world, ranks near the bottom when compared to the other industrialized nations in health care quality. And we rank at the top in cost for this substandard care. We are the only industrialized country in the world that does not have a single payer plan. The real overall administrative cost is close to 30% of every dollar spent on health care. The cost to the employers and employees continue to rise at 3 to 4 times the general inflation. With the employers unable to keep up with this level of inflation more and more are reducing or eliminating retiree health care benefits. Many employees can no longer look forward to employer sponsored health care, and most will not be able to pay the premiums themselves.

I recently attended the Local #1 Legislative Conference in Sacramento and one of the speakers was Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi (previously Insurance Commissioner for the State of California). John gave us a real world example. There is a children's hospital in Canada that has the same size, number of beds, treatments etc. as a children's hospital in southern California. The billing department in the Canadian Hospital required 3 people; the billing department in the California hospital required 273 people. When I heard this I thought I had heard wrong, then John said think of all the different insurance plans,

**Universal Healthcare
For All Citizens?**



DON'T BE SILLY!

That kind of thing is only for **EVERY OTHER** industrialized nation.

This article is Part 2 of a series. Look for the next edition for more valuable information!

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