

We Declare Our Health Care Independence
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We declare our health care independence! Insurers, politicians, employers, doctors and hospital administrators refuse to assent to principles that are good and necessary for the public good.

Insurers provide health care financing programs that become cost prohibitive and often impossible to acquire when needed most. Politicians push forward health care revisions which increase the importance of health care financing and centralized control over giving individuals the financial capacity and the right to make their own health care decisions. Employers follow business tactics that favor younger, less costly and more easily insurable employees over older, more costly employees who must find alternative health financing when it is often most difficult and expensive to acquire. Doctors and hospital administrators perpetuate a payment system that rewards treating diseases and sickness with more and expensive services over establishing life-long practices of wellness and healthy habits.

Our country was formed on the belief that we are all created equal and endowed with the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And now, the politicians supported by these critical health care special interest groups are looking to take away our health care freedoms and require that we further put the insurers, government, doctors, hospitals, and to a lesser extent employers in control of our health care by requiring that we finance health care through mandated, minimum benefit programs or face additional taxes.

We have not been silent in our call for constructive change on all sides of the ongoing health care debate. We warned them with our demands for health care reform, the 2008 presidential election, our vocal opposition to a public option, Tea Party demonstrations and now our renewed call for change with the surprise elections of Republican governors in both New Jersey and Virginia. Yet, they remain deaf to our call for constructive change.

We want change that allows each of us to acquire the financial capacity tailored to our own individual need and assures that we do not lose financial resources and access to health care when needed most. We want change that empowers us as consumers to make our own health care decisions through access to relevant health care quality and cost information. We want change that provides timely access to care and rewards physicians that care for our health and not just our sickness. We want change that allows us to improve our health by taking our prescriptions and following the preventive treatments we know work without being penalized for the poor lifestyle choices of others.

Thomas Jefferson stated, "Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed". I fear we are on a path that, like Jefferson's "despotic government," health care will become despotic with "repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny" over the health care consumer.

Over the past decade, there have been numerous attempts to pass a Patients' Bill of Rights without success. The Founding Fathers understood that the colonies required a unity of purpose with a shared direction before they could support a Bill of Rights. With the Declaration of Independence, the Founding Fathers achieved such unity of purpose and passed it without

dissent. We require such unity of purpose by signing our own Declaration of Health Care Independence. And like the Declaration of Independence, our Declaration of Health Care Independence will have at its center the individual.

You can find a Declaration of Health Care Independence proposal at www.navben.us/Declaration.php.