

Rosemary Noonan, Storrs, CT, February 9, 2011

I am a 58 year old single white female with a degree in English and Accounting and more recently received LPN certification. Although I am single, I am a surrogate mother to two boys for the past ten years when a close friend was severely brain damaged by an auto accident and could no longer care for her boys. I am happy to report they are in graduate school and are remarkably responsible.

My medical problems began in 1981 while a student at the Univ. of Connecticut. I suddenly became ill for 12 hours and then it subsided for 12 hours and then repeated. I saw a physician that did not identify the problem immediately since it subsided. I did not seek help at the emergency room even though I was in severe pain because I knew I could not afford it. At that time student insurance was optional and I did not think I would need it. As a result of not having the money to seek medical care, my pain came again and ruptured my appendix and with my mother's insistence I went to the Emergency Room and was treated. Unfortunately, two weeks later I was diagnosed with peritonitis, a result of the ruptured appendix and bacterial deposits that remained after surgery. Initially the hospital was seeking payment for the medical treatment which I did not have, but I countersued for inadequate medical treatment, and they dropped seeking payment. I had another hospitalization for peritonitis and that was paid for as well. However, I did not feel comfortable in the hospital as they (the staff) treated me like scum bag. In 1985, I had another bout of peritonitis while working and had insurance to cover the surgery. Two of the bouts of peritonitis almost killed me. Since, I've had other ailments which my insurance covered due to my employment.

In 2004, I was laid off from Phoenix Investment Partners and was on unemployment for 9-10 months while seeking new employment unsuccessfully. With financial aid from my parents, I became a nurse's aide and went to Windham Technical School to earn my LPN. I was working fulltime at Fox Hill Nursing & Rehabilitation Center for four nights a week and had insurance. I made the decision to cut back to 3 nights a week as I was physically fatigued as the work consists of hard labor. At the time, I was under the impression that these hours are still considered as a regular employee and I would continue with insurance benefits with a slight increase in the premium. However, I learned that I no longer am eligible for the insurance benefit. This, in itself, is a strange phenomenon as I am in contact with diseased people and can easily be infected by the patients on the job.

Today, I remain uninsured after seeking insurance options, such as the Charter Oak Health Plan. I am unable to afford the premium without making lifestyle changes. I have worked to earn my home and am unwilling to give it up or the small thrills of cable television. I seek treatment at Generations and am fortunate that my current medical needs are minor.

I do not believe in our health care delivery system which profits from people's misfortune. I will not be blackmailed by a system that is corrupt. I refuse to go to the hospital as I feel like a criminal, guilty, and disgusted. My family and friends agree with me and feel that the system is corrupt and run by self serving criminals to keep the middle class paralyzed. They have no concern for average person and only care about their own personal portfolios.

If SustiNet is passed, then I would have affordable options and would not fear getting the medical care I deserve. A public option health plan is the best option for the people. I am so angry at our current delivery system, I will not buy insurance from a for profit company. I will not buy into that system that is morally degenerate to profit from someone's health; health care should not be a marketable commodity. I would rather die than pay money for health insurance.