

From Carol L Rizzolo, PhD, 24 Long Hill Farm, Guilford CT 06437

To The Committee Members:

Most of my professional life has been spent in the practice of medicine. I am a certified Physician's Assistant and worked in that field for 25 years. We are all watching the horror of the Covid pandemic unfold in our country. Tragically, we are learning every day of the tragic results of healthcare disparities in our medical system. The lack of affordable healthcare in CT has cost many their lives and indeed, I argue, the lack of affordable health insurance costs us all.

Imagine the situation where any low wage or uninsured member of our community contracts a communicable disease such as measles, polio, Hep B, or even something as treatable as gonorrhea . These infections, much like Covid 19 know no bounds as to who they infect. These infections easily and readily spread to create a community outbreak causing long lasting and horrific consequences. All because the infected individual was not able to access preventive healthcare. This is just unconscionable.

What about the individual with Diabetes. How can we possibly stand by and not allow this person in a health crisis access to the help that they need? The care that is so readily available to those with the means to afford it. How can we not offer preventive care so that these people can stay out of crisis? Is this really who we are as Americans? Is this really what CT stands for? The folks with money can afford to stay healthy and see their doctors and those without money must choose between paying for life saving medications or food and rent?

Imagine the parent of a youngster with a high fever and a stiff neck. This could certainly be meningitis, a highly contagious and potentially fatal illness. Have that child go untreated and be out in the community, untreated and now your children and mine have suddenly become exposed and may die.

Consider the health risk to the myriad members of our community , infants and elderly, or immune compromised who come into contact with someone who has the flu. Let's make this individual someone who was unable to get treatment for the flu to make it less contagious to others. Now we have an outbreak of our own making, based on the immoral policy that we, the greatest nation in the country, is denying someone access to care because they don't have the proper governmental paperwork. It is hard to describe my feeling on this, but I hope it is clear from the many examples that I have cited above that not giving anyone access to medical care, dreamers or others, would create a completely preventable health crisis in Connecticut.

Please do the right thing. Withholding access to healthcare is never the right thing to do, both morally and ethically.

Thank you,
Carol L Rizzolo, PA, PhD