

## MISSION

To educate and mobilize League members to work toward legislation and other reforms that enact the goals of our LWVUS health care position, with a strong focus on [expanded and improved Medicare for All](#).

## Medicaid Cuts & Denied Care = Stressed Families

The authors of the Big Ugly Bill (HR1) thought to kick the consequences of their cruel cuts to Medicaid down the road — by [delaying their implementation](#) until after the midterms later this year. However, we are already witnessing the pain being inflicted by less formal means of denying care.

For example, we heard in our joint [webinar](#) with the LWV Immigration Interest Group Feb. 4 that cuts for many immigrant groups were scheduled for the first of this year. Even more effective than the official cuts deny them care, though, is the deep fear produced by public violence and random kidnappings that [depress immigrants' use of clinical facilities](#) even more than the cuts themselves.

Similarly, unlegislated policy details can be painful, as we learned at our monthly zoom February 22. A League member from upstate NY, now in Colorado, asked whether people in other states were already having issues from Medicaid cuts like her family was. She was looking for different ways to cope with them. She recounted how the careful coordination of aides paid for by Medicaid, which helped her family members care for their brother with premature dementia in his own apartment, came crashing down — with no warning nor even any notification of what was happening.

It took more than a week on the phone to find out why the aides suddenly stopped getting paid — AFTER

they had given care. It turned out that, despite his continued eligibility after [protections from the American Rescue Act expired](#) last year in advance of the HR1 cuts, his family was the victim of the botched transition from the [NYS Consumer-Directed Personal](#)

[Assistance Program](#) that reduced more than 600 fiscal intermediaries to a single fiscal intermediary.

Another attendee, who was also a client of the sole remaining firm, "PPL," reported that PPL's phone and computer systems chose the point of maximal pain during the transition to be out of service for a month.

**No warning...**

**...no notification  
family left scrambling  
for an alternative...**

**...people falling  
through the cracks**

Regardless of the fact that the funds were authorized, the family was left scrambling to find a spot in a nursing home for their brother, a much more expensive alternative for both the family and the state.

Veterans are also vulnerable, in their case, to the incompetence of the private company with a [no-bid contract](#) to replace the award-winning first of its kind integrated medical records system that was developed by the VA in the 1990s. It could be corruption, or it could be the unearned assumption that a corporate icon, Oracle, would do better than the government.

So far, though, it has been a [disaster](#). The new system has delivered cost overruns instead of cost-cutting, and botched roll-outs leave millions of [veterans and their children who depend on Medicaid](#) falling through the cracks: all [without adequate planning or oversight](#). *Submitted by Barbara Pearson*



### The Amazing Life of carolyn Virden Brown

HCR4US members were saddened to learn of the passing in January of carolyn Brown, a dedicated member from Alaska who peppered her always valuable comments and suggestions with colorful expressions from her rural Texas upbringing. The lower case "c" she insisted on for her name, belied the varied experience, practical problem-solving and authority she exercised over the course of her long, productive career detailed in her [obituary](#).

**Newsletter Staff:**  
**Barbara Pearson**  
& **Candy Birch**

2/22 Attendees

CA — Doug Cooper  
CA — Jon Li  
CO — Marilyn Ayers  
CO — Barbara Dungey  
CO — Linda Mahan  
CO — Kathy Maher

GA — Sharon Hill  
GA — Jackie Killings  
KS — Linda Johnson  
MA — Barbara Pearson  
MA — Suzanne Steinbach  
MI — Maria Woloson

NY — Judy Esterquest  
NY — Marita Florini  
NY — Haley Mack  
NY — MaryKate Owens  
NY — Sara Wokan  
NY — Dorothy Wrase-Hares

OR — Christa Daniel  
VT — Mary Alice Bisbee  
VT — Jean Hopkins  
VT — Betty Keller  
WA — Mary Lynne Courtney  
WA — Glenda Hammond



## Newsletter Feedback

Click [here](#) to provide us with your feedback about the newsletter.

## In Case You Missed It

Feb. 22 — HCR4US meeting [video](#) and [audio](#) and [supplementary materials](#) with Action Links

Feb. 25 LWV Alachua County Healthcare Committee hosted “[The Science Behind Vaccine Requirements](#)” with speakers Dr. Fred Southwick and Dr. Paul Offitt. Slides available upon [request](#).

## Upcoming

Mar 24 8:00 p.m. ET — PNHP presents “Moral Injury in Medicine: The Human Costs of Practicing in a Profit-Driven System” webinar. Register [here](#).



Find a No Kings [event](#) near you. Can you bring someone who has not yet participated in a “No Kings” event?

## Networking

### One Payer States

<https://www.onepayerstates.org/>

### National Single Payer

<https://nationalsinglepayer.com/>

### Healthcare Advocacy on Substack

[Here's the link.](#)

### Physicians for a Nat'l Health Program

<https://pnhp.org/>

### Center for Medicare Advocacy

<https://www.MedicareAvocacy.org>

## HCR4US Websites

### HCR4US Toolkit:

<https://lwvhealthcarereform.org>

### HCR4US Youtube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/LWVHealthCareReform>

### HCR4US Web-Contact Form:

[tinyurl.com/Contact-LWV-HCR-4US](https://tinyurl.com/Contact-LWV-HCR-4US)

### League Update Newsletter Sign Up:

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/league-update-newsletter-sign>

# Single Payer ‘Hands Down’ the Best Way to Solve High Healthcare Costs

[Medpage Today](#), rated as "highly factual" and "low-bias" by [Media-biasFactCheck.com](#), is running a series asking the same 7 questions of policy experts from many different backgrounds. In this interview, [Robert Weissman](#), co-president of Public Citizen, makes a compelling case for single payer. The 6-minute [video](#) and [transcript](#) are available.



**What has been the greatest contributor to high healthcare costs in the U.S.?**

*High administrative costs for insurers and providers.*

**Has physician pay contributed to high costs?**

*Not so much, though insurance requirements keep them from being more efficient.*

**Have administrative costs contributed to high costs?**

*Yes.*

**What is the best solution you've heard for lowering the cost of healthcare?**

*Single Payer — HANDS DOWN.*

**Do you see any issues with access to care under single payer?**

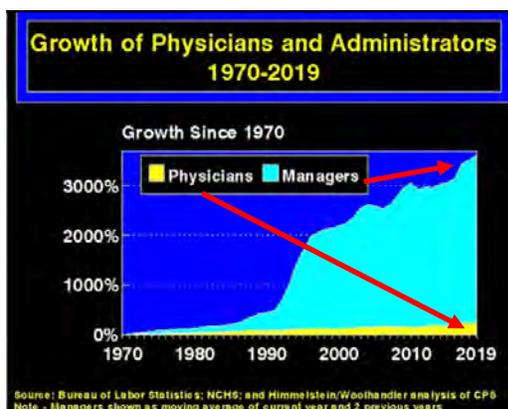
*No, it's mandated to cover everyone.*

**Would greater transparency in pricing help bring down costs?**

*Not so much.*

**Will artificial intelligence (AI) be able to help control costs?**

*Unlikely. We've seen no evidence even in business. Why would we expect it in the hospitals?*



If you have any doubts about the [contribution to the cost of health care of administrators](#) (light blue) versus physicians (yellow), compare their growth over time in [this chart](#) from Physicians for a National Health Program. The chart doesn't make a causal argument, but strongly suggests what other evidence can support.

What other questions would you want to ask the experts?