

Congress Must Act: Stop Big Health Care Corporations from Keeping Workers and Small Businesses Under Water



AMERICANS ARE TRAPPED IN AN ECONOMIC AND HEALTH CARE AFFORDABILITY CRISIS.



Over 100 million people in America have medical debt and nearly half of all Americans have reported having to forgo needed medical care due to the cost.¹



Nearly 90% of employers say rising health care costs will threaten their ability to provide health benefits to American workers over the next 5 to 10 years.²

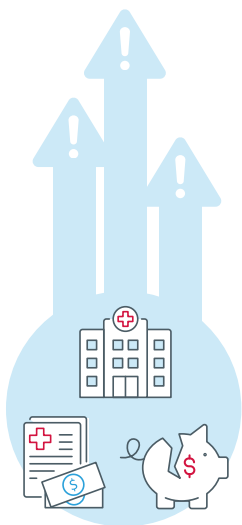


Record numbers of Americans (9 in 10) are *very* concerned about the cost of critical, everyday necessities, including food, housing and health care.³

American voters overwhelmingly say the economy and rising costs are the top issues that policymakers need to address.⁴ There is no better way for Congress to deliver for the American people and small businesses than by passing pro-consumer reforms that lower health care costs by making the health care system more transparent, competitive and affordable. **Policymakers should increase hospital and plan transparency, enact comprehensive same service same price payment and honest billing reforms, and restrict the use of anti-competitive practices and clauses in health care contracting agreements.**

MEDICAL MONOPOLIES ARE HURTING AMERICAN WORKERS.

In large part, this economic and affordability crisis is caused by giant health care corporations and their anti-competitive practices which increase health care costs for everyone and force employers to spend more on health care premiums and less on workers' wages.⁵



- Since 2015, hospital prices have increased as much as 31% nationally, now accounting for nearly one-third of U.S. health care spending and growing more than four times faster than workers' paychecks.⁶
- The cost of a family employer-sponsored health insurance plan increased 223% in the past two decades alone, outpacing inflation and workers' wages.⁷ This higher cost of care means that:
 1. Workers are losing thousands of dollars in wages, with a median U.S. family of four estimated to have lost \$125,000 in wages over the past three decades.⁸ These wage losses are even worse for low- and middle-income workers and people living in rural communities⁹;
 2. Workers are left with insurance plans that have larger cost-sharing requirements, and enrollment in employer-sponsored insurance (ESI) has plummeted to record lows.¹⁰

If medical monopolies are allowed to continue price-gouging our nation's workers and rural communities, low-income workers could lose nearly \$20,000 in wages over the next decade.¹¹



THE SOLUTION:

Policymakers should deliver for the American people, who overwhelmingly voted in favor of lower health care costs, by:

- Strengthening and codifying federal Hospital Price Transparency and Transparency in Coverage regulations.
- Enacting comprehensive same service same price payment and honest billing reforms.
- Restricting the use of anti-competitive practices and clauses in health care contracting agreements.

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Citations provided at familiesusa.org/income-inequality



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