



Letters to The Star-Ledger

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Fix the current system

As a member of the New Jersey Association of Health Underwriters, I was very troubled to learn of the U.S House of Representatives' recent proposal to move forward with a government-run health care option.

While some in the federal government are lauding this option as a way for businesses and families to remove themselves from the crushing burden of health care costs, I truly believe the opposite will happen.

If the public option is passed by Congress, it will function in much of the same way as the Medicare system does. And this system truly is broken, as Medicare underpayments to doctors and hospitals are ultimately passed onto employers and individuals through higher premiums.

A new government-run program would exacerbate the underfunding of providers, increase individual and family premiums by more than \$526 per year and leave fewer people with private coverage to offset this growing cost-shift.

Not only that, but many Medicare beneficiaries today have trouble locating a primary care physician that will accept new Medicare patients. Enrollees in the government-run health plan would experience similar difficulties in locating a participating physician who is taking on new patients or long wait times before a patient could visit a doctor.

Let's work to fix our current health care system, rather than introduce this unnecessary and expensive layer of government.

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