



HEALTH CARE

Health care is a vital component of our lives that works best when we have the right kind of capitalism – the kind that produces more individual consumer choices for both costs and coverages, and more competition that drives prices down.



HOW I LOOK AT HEALTH CARE

Most Democrats' preferred models for health care now do the opposite: they put the government in charge of virtually all consumer choice in health care, making the government the one to decide which treatments are mandated and covered. Some Democrats even propose a socialized model which prevents private insurance from offering an alternative. Meanwhile the Trump Administration, while railing against ObamaCare with empty rhetoric, refuses to explain in any great detail what it prefers, and has yet to make any significant changes.

I've said before that I am not an absolutist or a partisan on this: I believe we should do what works for the American people, regardless of whose idea it is. For

example, the Affordable Care Act added twenty million people to the roles of the insured, thereby lowering system costs per capita. As President, I can guarantee to each and every American that I will not take away the insurance they currently have, whether it is through private insurance or it is the insurance which the ACA gave to them.

That being said, there is work yet needing to be done. We need to amend certain features of the Affordable Care Act, and to build upon others; we do not need to completely tear down a program which have assisted millions of people. Above all, we need to make our health care system work for you, as consumer and as patient.



THE CORE ISSUE

We need to slow the rise of health care prices caused by our third-party payer model. We can do this without a full-on assault on the insurance industry and without socialized health care. What we need is to make patients the customer again, wherever possible.

Currently, big hospitals bill by insurance companies which then stick employers with the bill when they offer their employees health coverage. We should require transparency in prices and eliminate regulations that reduce competition among insurers and perversely incentivize insurers to narrow their coverage networks. As there are more choices of insurers and providers, fewer and fewer providers will be able to get away with monopolizing the healthcare market.

We need to get rid of regulations that eliminate low-cost health insurance plans – even if there is a corresponding trade-off in coverage. Some people simply want to pay less, and there’s nothing wrong with that. More

options and fewer regulations make it more likely that innovative entrepreneurs will be able to come up with something that works for consumers, in the same way that we have seen with “minute clinics” and doctors who accept payment in only cash.

We need to put the power (money) in the system back in the hands of the patient. A major tool toward accomplishing this is making health savings accounts more useful. Right now they’re valid only for certain transactions, and they’re being eclipsed by the ACA’s Cadillac plan requirements. People should be able to put away funds on a tax-advantaged basis to build up a bulwark against a health care emergency or even a catastrophic event within the family. With health care, it’s often better to simply cut out the in-between and instead create a system wherein the patient has the final say as the ultimate customer, the individual to whom the duty of good and honest service is owed.



FIXING DRUG PRICES

A major source of health care expense for millions of Americans lies not in treatment but in prescription drugs.

There are several areas in which we can improve on this that will make a difference for millions of Americans.

Currently, the FDA drug approval process in the U.S. makes it so that it takes billions of dollars and sometimes decades to bring new drugs to market. In the interim, thousands of people can die as they wait for approval of

a revolutionary treatment. The FDA needs to simplify its process so that safety is not compromised, but ingenuity is encouraged. The prescription drug approval process should not be reserved for only the mega corporations who have the resources.

We should also reform the patent process for prescription drugs which allows pharmaceutical companies to prevent cheaper generic alternatives from coming to

market. In addition, we should allow Americans to purchase safe and low-cost prescription drugs from Canada and any other approved jurisdictions.

Even in the few instances where more government oversight is required, we must keep the consumer in

mind. For that reason, Medicare must be permitted to negotiate prescription drug prices. We should also consider monitoring the prices of prescription drug prices in other Western nations as an indicator of the market value of these drugs.



FIXING VETERANS' HEALTH CARE

One of the most significant areas where more government control has clearly failed is with the Veterans Administration. We need to allow our veterans more choice in their health insurance and provide vouchers for veterans who wish to pick a different hospital, which

will also reduce crowding and backlogs at VA hospitals. We should also allow veterans to treat conditions like PTSD with cannabis without any risk of losing their benefits.



MARKET SOLUTIONS FOR MEDICAL LEAVE

Another significant matter which my Administration will take up is the encouragement of private companies to provide paid family and medical leave to their workers.

While many Democrats wish to do this through a top-down government mandate, I will instead provide tax incentives and credits to companies which make the right choice. No worker should have to be concerned

about losing their job or wages simply because they got sick.

When you or a loved one need serious treatment, it can often be the worst and most stressful time of your life. You deserve to have options as a customer, just as you do with any other industry. Health care law and policy should support that.

Learn more about Bill Weld and his 2020 run for President of the United States of America by visiting WELD2020.ORG