



Healthcare Plan

Ensuring access to quality care at an affordable price

Health insurance premiums, prescription drug prices, out-of-pocket costs, and overall healthcare spending have risen dramatically since 2009, making it harder than ever for New York families to access quality care at an affordable price. Total healthcare spending in the United States topped \$4 trillion in 2020, which is significantly more than any other advanced economy. The Kaiser Family Foundation found that premiums and deductibles have risen much faster than wages since 2009. In 2019, premiums averaged more than \$7,000 for an individual and over \$20,000 for families, an increase from 2018. Prescription drug costs have also skyrocketed for families and seniors over the last year, with overall prices rising 33 percent since 2014.

My priority in Congress is to expand your access to affordable, quality healthcare. There are many ways to do this, including by fostering greater competition in the marketplace. This would mean more choices for patients, better quality care for everyone, and lower prices that families can afford. I am also working to deliver more resources and support to rural hospitals in our district, which we rely on for care and services. I am committed to working with Republicans and Democrats alike to find solutions that increase competition and improve access and quality.

I encourage you to read more about the initiatives I am supporting in Congress to deliver on my commitment to drive meaningful healthcare reform forward. I look forward to your feedback.

Expanding Access to Care in Rural Communities

- **Introduced H.R. 3069, Access for Rural Communities Act:** I introduced this bipartisan bill to allow Sole Community and Medicare Dependent hospitals in New York to receive a fair Medicare Volume Decrease Adjustment (VDA) to maintain core staff and services when experiencing a significant decrease in patient volume due to circumstances beyond their control. It also allows 16 small, rural hospitals in New York to avoid nearly \$20 million in erroneous repayments, with a punitive interest rate of over 9 percent.
- **Cosponsored H.R. 489, Protecting Rural Access to Care Act:** This legislation will protect rural hospitals from losing their certifications as Critical Access Hospitals under Medicare. Guidance issued in 2015 by the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services put rural hospitals at a very serious risk of losing this certification, which would result in them losing significant benefits. This bill protects our rural hospitals and their funding.

Supporting Seniors and Other Vulnerable Populations

- **Introduced the Essential Caregivers Act:** I introduced this legislation to avoid the deadly effects of isolation for seniors in nursing homes and individuals with disabilities

in long-term care facilities. Should there be a future public health emergency, residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities would have the opportunity to designate an “essential caregiver” to continue caring for them throughout the emergency, so long as they follow the same strict safety requirements as staff. This will ensure that vulnerable individuals never again suffer alone in the event of a future emergency.

- **Cosponsored H.R. 2168, the Expanded Telehealth Access Act:** This bill expands coverage for telehealth visits under Medicare, so that seniors never miss critical appointments. This is especially relevant as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. While telehealth may not be appropriate in every circumstance, expanding access offers greater options to seniors who may find it difficult or unsafe to travel.

Driving Down Costs and Increasing Access

- **Support Strong Funding for Community Health Centers:** I am honored to be part of a bipartisan effort in Congress to expand funding for Community Health Centers. Community Health Centers provide quality and affordable care to those most in need across New York’s 22nd Congressional District. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Community Health Centers confronted the challenges head on and continued to deliver much-needed care. With robust funding into the future, Community Health Centers will continue to be vitally important resources for communities across New York.
- **Cosponsored H.R. 19, the Lower Costs, More Cures Act:** This comprehensive bill lowers the cost of life-saving drugs like insulin by capping drug spending under Medicare Part D and also reducing the out-of-pocket costs of insulin for families. The bill also makes it harder for drug companies to prevent safe generics and biosimilars from coming to the market, ensuring that more affordable prescription drugs are made available to consumers. Finally, the bill increases pricing transparency by requiring drug companies to publicly list prices in any future advertisements.
- **Voted “Yes” on H.R. 1629, the Fairness in Orphan Drug Exclusivity Act:** This bill would institute limitations on market exclusivity for drugs designated as “orphan drugs” under Section 526(a)(2)(B) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act. This bipartisan bill closes a loophole that could be used to block pharmaceutical competition and prevent innovative treatments for rare conditions affecting fewer than 200,000 people from coming to market. I support bills like this that eliminate barriers for innovative medical-assisted treatments, boost competition, and drive down the cost of new medicine.

Investing in Research

- **Accelerating Treatments for Rare Diseases:** I cosponsored H.R. 1730, the Speeding Therapy Access Today Act and H.R. 1184, the Helping Experts Accelerate Rare Treatments Act to improve treatments for rare diseases and ensure equal access to care. These bills direct the FDA to accelerate the development of treatments for rare diseases, which will save lives and make therapeutics more affordable.

- **Support Autism Spectrum Disorder Research:** As a Member of the Congressional Autism Caucus, I support continued funding for Autism research, which will have a direct impact on the lives of those living with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Your views are always important to me. Please write to me on my website or call my office at 202-225-3665 with feedback, questions, or concerns.