

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 2, 2026

Dear Chairman Cassidy and Chairman Crapo:

We write to request hearings in the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee (HELP) and the Finance Committee with the CEOs of the largest health insurance companies in America.

In America today, we have a health care system that is fundamentally broken. While we spend over twice as much per capita on health care as other wealthy nations, over 85 million Americans are uninsured or under-insured, more than half a million people go bankrupt due to medically-related debt, one out of four Americans cannot afford the medicine their doctors prescribe, and over 60,000 Americans die every year because they can't afford to see a doctor on time.^{1,2}

While our health care system is failing ordinary Americans, it is working exceptionally well for big insurance companies. While 42% of cancer patients go bankrupt within the first two years of their diagnosis, last year the seven major health insurance companies in America made over \$54 billion in profits.^{3,4} Despite spending nearly \$15,500 per person on health care, our life expectancy is lower and our infant mortality rate is higher than other major countries.⁵ Against the backdrop of a system that leaves working families paying higher and higher medical bills, the nation's top insurers paid their CEOs exorbitant compensation packages.

The American public deserves to know why the big insurance executives that testified before the House earlier this year continue to get rich, as over one-third of people with health insurance have been forced to skip or delay getting the care they need because of the outrageous cost.⁶ Our constituents report that even when they do have coverage, they have trouble getting access to care due to endless coverage denials and requests for prior authorization from insurance companies making billions of dollars each year. As working families across the country pay higher and higher premiums, they also face higher deductibles, coinsurance, and copayments when they need to actually use their coverage. A recent poll from the Kaiser Family Foundation found that Americans are more worried about being able to afford health care than any other expense including food, rent, and utilities.⁷

Meanwhile, UnitedHealth Group spent \$13.5 billion on stock buybacks and dividends last year and paid its CEO tens of millions of dollars after making \$19.0 billion in profits.^{8,9} Cigna spent over \$5 billion on stock buybacks and dividends last year and made \$8 billion in profits. In 2024, Cigna rewarded its CEO with a \$51 million compensation package.^{10,11} And CVS/Aetna spent \$3.4 billion on stock buybacks and

¹ <https://www.commonwealthfund.org/publications/surveys/2024/nov/state-health-insurance-coverage-us-2024-biennial-survey>

² <https://www.kff.org/health-costs/kff-health-tracking-poll-february-2019-prescription-drugs/>

³ [https://www.amjmed.com/article/S0002-9343\(18\)30509-6/abstract](https://www.amjmed.com/article/S0002-9343(18)30509-6/abstract)

⁴ <https://healthcareuncovered.substack.com/p/2025-big-insurances-17-trillion-year>

⁵ <https://www.cms.gov/data-research/statistics-trends-and-reports/national-health-expenditure-data/nhe-fact-sheet>

⁶ <https://www.kff.org/health-costs/americans-challenges-with-health-care-costs/>

⁷ *id*

⁸ <https://www.unitedhealthgroup.com/content/dam/UHG/PDF/investors/2025/unh-reports-2025-results-and-issues-2026-outlook.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.fiercehealthcare.com/payers/unitedhealth-ceo-hemsley-earn-1m-base-salary-60m-equity-award>

¹⁰ Inclusive of realized gains. <https://www.statnews.com/2025/08/18/healthcare-executive-compensation-biotech-ceo-sahin-tops-list/>

¹¹ <https://newsroom.thecignagroup.com/2026-02-05-The-Cigna-Group-Reports-Strong-Fourth-Quarter-and-Full-Year-2025-Results,-Establishes-2026-Outlook-and-Increases-Dividend>

dividends last year while making \$14.4 billion in profits and paying its outgoing CEO \$23.4 million in compensation in 2024.^{12,13}

Insurers have used every possible tool and exploited every possible loophole to continue growing their profits. The insurance market has consolidated such that a few large insurers dominate the commercial insurance market. At the same time, major insurers have “vertically integrated,” buying up pieces of the health care supply chain to squeeze every dollar out of every patient and every health care transaction.

For example, UnitedHealth Group, alone, owns nearly 2,700 unique subsidiaries.¹⁴ A patient covered by United could see a doctor employed by United, receive a prescription from a United-owned mail-order pharmacy, and have surgery performed at a facility owned by United. At every step of the way, United can extract profit from patients, all while side-stepping rules that establish minimum standards for how much revenue from insurance premiums must be spent on actual patient care.

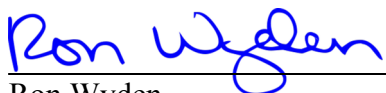
Patients also report significant difficulty getting insurance companies to pay for care they need. Nearly 70 percent of Americans with health insurance report that managing prior authorization requests from health insurance companies is a burden.¹⁵ That is unacceptable.

While serving as chairmen of the Senate committees that oversee our health care system, you have both criticized the greed of the health insurance industry. Chair Cassidy, you have recalled instances in your clinical practice where, “patients come, distraught, they cannot afford whatever you are ordering because their deductible is so high.”¹⁶ Chair Crapo, you have criticized insurance companies for “hiking premiums” and scamming the system by retaining “money even if no payments are made on behalf of patients.”^{17,18}

We agree. It is time for our committees to hold the chief executives of the major health insurance companies accountable for their greed and to address the health care crisis in America, as our colleagues in the House did earlier this year on a bipartisan basis.

We look forward to working with you to schedule these hearings as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Finance



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator
Ranking Member, Committee
on Health, Education, Labor,
and Pensions

¹² https://s206.q4cdn.com/752775519/files/doc_financials/2025/q4/Q4-2025-Earnings-Release.pdf

¹³ https://s206.q4cdn.com/752775519/files/doc_financials/2024/ar/CVS-Health-2025-Proxy.pdf

¹⁴ <https://www.sunlightreportinsurance.com/>

¹⁵ <https://www.kff.org/public-opinion/kff-health-tracking-poll-prior-authorizations-rank-as-publics-biggest-burden-when-getting-health-care/>

¹⁶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_pm3SU1gsg

¹⁷ <https://www.finance.senate.gov/chairmans-news/crapo-obamacare-has-undermined-health-care-in-america>

¹⁸ <https://www.crapo.senate.gov/media/newsreleases/crapo-americans-should-control-their-own-health-care>