

## YOUR VIEW

### Insurance coverage gap

I am writing to address the issue we are currently facing with the insurance coverage gap.

Working in the medical billing field has brought these issues to light for me. This is not just an issue I hear about on the news. I work with it; I feel the exasperation from patients. I feel helpless. What can I do?

1,120; 19,974; 10,355. What are these numbers? They are the number of people uninsured who fall in the coverage gap in the counties of Dade, Jasper and Newton. This letter is not intended to lash out at the Affordable Care Act, but rather to bring insight to those who are unaware of the issues that are out there.

I have heard stories of people who have tried to obtain insurance coverage through the health insurance marketplace and they either don't qualify or the cost of the premium is so high, they can't afford it. They turn to Medicaid and then find out that their income is too high to qualify. What are their options? They are penalized by our government for not obtaining insurance, but they have fallen into the coverage gap. What are they to do? I have received calls from people trying to determine how much they would pay for their medical services without insurance. The cost of health care is astronomical. The health care coverage gap needs to be addressed. The insurance plans through the health insurance marketplace needs addressed. Who can afford a \$500 to \$700 monthly premium with an insurance plan that has a \$5,000 or higher deductible that must be met before insurance starts paying your bills? I'm not saying all plans are that expen-

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sive, but I have been in contact with several people who were given quotes similar to this for their insurance coverage. My heart breaks for those who are considered "self-pay" (those with no insurance) and they find themselves hospitalized for an injury or an illness, and for those who don't have the money to receive the care they need.

Some of these people feel at the end of their rope. They don't know how they will continue to make ends meet. We need to educate ourselves on what is happening outside of our lives. These people are our friends, relatives and neighbors. We need to help them be a voice that gets the attention of Congress.

Kimberly Sampson  
Joplin

### Plutocrats

The Senate and the House are both controlled by men like Fred Thompson. Apparently they are sleep-deprived men who lie awake nights worrying about ways to give the rich another tax cut. Fred dropped out of the 2007 presidential primary early so he could get some sleep.

If conservatives nominate another plutocrat to "Bush-Whack" the stock market again, it won't matter much to the voters if Hillary Clinton used email, voice mail, snail mail, smoke signals, carrier pi-