

OPINION > LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letter: Medicare for All is already being paid for

By [LETTERS TO THE EDITOR](#) |

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The COVID-19 epidemic has had a huge impact on health and health care in the United States, but it is worth noting that life expectancy in the U.S. was declining even before the pandemic. In 1980 life expectancy here was equal to that in other economically advanced nations. But in 2018 our life expectancy was 3.7 years less than the other G7 nations. What we lack is a comprehensive national health insurance program like improved Medicare for All.

But can we afford Medicare for All? Actually we are already paying enough to cover everyone and are not getting our money's worth. We have the highest per capita health expenditures in the world. 61% of revenues for the private insurance companies come from taxpayers. And the overhead of a Medicare for All system would be 1/3 that of our private insurance companies.

Proposals for Medicare for All finance it through progressive taxes directed at the wealthiest taxpayers and a payroll tax. The individual tax impact, if any, would be offset by the elimination of insurance premiums, deductibles, copays, surprise medical bills and other mysterious fees.

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As a retired physician, it has been interesting for me to experience health care in Chico as a patient. Whether being vaccinated against COVID-19 or being treated as an inpatient or outpatient by my primary doctor or at Enloe my care has been skillful, wise and compassionate. We have great caretakers in Chico and the United States. Now we need a great national health insurance program like Medicare for All.

— *David Potter, Chico*



Letters to the Editor

3

