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The Democratic Leader



Senate of Pennsylvania

June 5, 2014

The Honorable Tom Corbett
Governor of Pennsylvania
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Dear Governor Corbett:

According to an article printed recently in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, you have directed your insurance commissioner and health secretary to meet with senior managers at UPMC and Highmark to “make sure that Pennsylvanians in the western part of the Commonwealth have clarity about their health care come January 1, 2015, and in the years to come.”

In the same article, UPMC officials indicated that they have been in active discussion with you and your team about a “robust, patient-focused transition when the contracts expire at the end of the year.”

As sponsor of bi-partisan legislation that would enable in-network access in addition to being a longtime advocate of a long-term solution of the contract dispute, I am troubled that meetings have been held without legislative involvement and that the focus of the talks is on clarity for patients about their health care, not unlimited access.

Patients in western Pennsylvania need more than clarity. They need in-network access to care. Highmark, UPMC and your administration should not be satisfied with a partial solution that helps some consumers but leaves others without options.

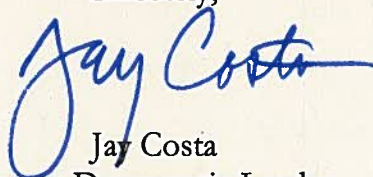
The point has always been for UPMC and Highmark to allow in-network access to facilities and doctors, not just to illustrate how care may be impacted if the contract is not renewed. To that end, I heartily agree with your statement in the Post-Gazette that the “companies must work together...to ensure ongoing and affordable access,” but that access must be universally applicable for all patients.

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Your new "Patients First" leadership should be negotiating to continue unlimited in-network access and the preservation of the current provider relationship for all insured health-care consumers.

I think it would be helpful for your "Patients First" team to meet with lawmakers from both sides of the aisle and in both chambers of the General Assembly to understand our desire to ensure access for all patients. Health-care consumers should not be forced to settle for any alternative that does not provide in-network access.

Sincerely,



Jay Costa
Senate Democratic Leader