

TESTIMONY presented to the Idaho State Senate Health and Welfare Committee March 26, 2019 concerning House Bill 277.

Chairman Martin and Members of the Committee: I'm Frank Monasterio from Mountain Home. I urge you to vote no on House Bill 277. Thank you for hearing me.

The United States is the only industrialized republic in the world that lets citizens die or go broke when they can't pay for treatment. On November 6, 2018, Idaho voters did something about it. Passed Proposition 2 to expand Medicaid coverage as allowed by Federal law.

Today we meet to consider HB 277. It purports to implement Proposition 2. In fact, it undermines Prop. 2.

HB 277 is expensive, tortured, bureaucratic, and litigious.

HB 277 undermines the will of the voters. Likely results are:

- That a medical insurance coverage gap will remain, with many uninsured;
- That Idahoans will continue to be double-taxed to sustain Indigent Care and Catastrophic Care funds;
- And many families earning between 100% and 138% of poverty will remain without insurance.
- Idaho tax dollars will be wasted on an expanded bureaucracy, and fewer Federal tax dollars will return to Idaho.
- Further, HB 277 will burden Idaho hospitals with uncompensated expenses and guarantee expensive court trials.

It is as if one wanted to drive from Boise to Twin Falls. But instead of simply pulling onto I-84 and heading east, he decided to divert through Canada in mid-winter, with consequent loss of time, and money, at increased risk of accident or of not arriving at all.

Only one thing is needful: treating our sick and injured neighbors efficiently. A clean implementation will do that.

Idahoans voted for that on 6 November 2018. Sadly, HB 277 wastes vast resources and fails to meet Idaho's needs.

I ask your no vote on HB 277.

Thank you.

--Frank Monasterio

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