

JERRY AND PENNY SCRIBNER

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May 24th 2017

Mr. Tony Blando, State Director
Office of Senator Ron Johnson
219 East Washington Avenue
Suite 100
Oshkosh, Wi 54901

Dear Mr. Blando,

We write to first thank you for coming out to meet with us and other protestors on the steps yesterday and for your expression of support for dialogue on the important problems facing our State and Nation.

We also thought that as a military veteran you might appreciate the thoughtful article about remembering 1967 that was in the NY Times yesterday. Here is the link:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/23/opinion/vietnam-war-widows.html>

We handed you a letter yesterday asking to meet with staff. We then filled out a constituent request for a meeting and handed it in at the office. There are a number of issues we would like to discuss. In this communication we want to focus on just two ---- health care costs and fiscal responsibility. As everyone knows, the two are linked. The former are rising uncontrollably and dragging down both business and the government's ability to pay. American businesses cannot compete with countries like Japan where employers pay nothing toward health care costs and thus have lower manufacturing costs nor against Germany where employers pay less than half what health care costs in the United States.

We are both 74 and covered by Medicare. You as a veteran have VA coverage which, like England's National Health Insurance program, is totally government run with government hospitals and government paid doctors. It isn't perfect but many veterans like it.

We agree that Medicare and health insurance generally is going to bankrupt the U.S. over time unless ever rising prices are controlled.

Rationing healthcare by denying coverage to millions is not the answer. Germany and other countries have universal healthcare that, unlike England, is based on private doctors, private hospitals and private insurance companies managing their health care systems. But they control costs and they don't allow the healthcare industry to charge inflated prices then hand the government and employers the bill. We cannot afford to pay drug companies the highest prices in the world for the same drugs they sell everywhere else including Canada and Mexico for a fraction of the cost they are allowed to charge in the U.S. If free enterprise and competition were working, a lifesaving Epi-Pen wouldn't be marked up to \$600 based on common ingredients that cost something in the neighborhood of \$2.

We support free enterprise and competition. But someone has to make sure that the competition is real and is fair. In sports, we have referees. We have rules that prohibit gouging out player's eyes, causing concussions, or breaking their legs. Even in war, there is the Geneva Convention. If we are going to avoid a collapse of the healthcare system or ruinous government deficits we are going to have to do more not less to control costs.

The House bill now in the Senate is premised on the fiction that millions of people can be denied basic health care and the rest can continue to face ever rising premiums and that competition will lower prices. If that were true we would not be where we are. Many of the people who the House Bill and the President's budget propose to shortchange on healthcare, voted Republican. We hope Senator Johnson recognizes that the Americans who voted for him and President Trump believed the replacement for Obamacare would be better not worse.

We also hope Senator Johnson will be mindful that now that Republicans control all three branches of Government, blaming the other party for a big increase in the deficit caused by tax cuts for business and hedge fund owners is not something a fiscally responsible party would attempt to do.

Sincerely,

Jerry and Penny Scribner