

Submitter: Lisa Roberts
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: HB4130

I am not part of any committee and do not typically participate in political events. I am new to (human) medicine having graduated from my Nephrology Fellowship in 2022. I have to admit, I am horrified by my experience in corporate medicine and thought initially it was just me, needing to figure out how to navigate this world. It did not take me long to learn that this is a systemic problem. It not only disrupts the very foundation of my core identity as a physician, but it also disrupts my moral and ethical standards.

When I was in veterinary school in the 1980s and my veterinary practice of nearly 25 years, I was taught and practiced the concept of conflict of interest being not acceptable or even legal.

Indeed, the current number 1 principle espoused by the AVMA is: "A veterinarian shall be influenced only by the welfare of the patient, the needs of the client, the safety of the public, and the need to uphold the public trust vested in the veterinary profession, and shall avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance thereof."

How egregiously oxymoronic it is that the hospital conglomerates, the private equity firms, and the big-tech companies have such low humanitarian standards as to interfere with the care and well-being of patients, and the health and well-being of the public by putting the needs of the financial opulence of these entities above the health and well-being of the patients, and providers.

I watched a compelling documentary film last year called "InHospitable" which tells the story from patients' point of view that, in its quest for market domination, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) was planning to make vital care unaffordable for hundreds of thousands of vulnerable patients. Watching this film was like a "gut punch" to me as I realized the very things I was up against in my small part of the country is a widespread systemic problem.

I try every day to uphold the Hippocratic oath that I took as a physician; Above all, do no harm. Another part of the Oath is "I shall charge only for my professional services and shall not profit financially in any other way as a result of the advice and care I render my patients." The current medical model makes it difficult to uphold this, as while I am not personally benefiting financially, the corporations most certainly are by dictating which medications, procedures, and services will be allowed and covered, to the detriment of the patients.

Let's stop the harm affecting millions of people.

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