

Street Action: Mocking Health Insurance Executives

This simple street action requires very little preparation and little or no street theater experience.

Each participant dresses up like a health insurance executive. This can be as elaborate as dressing up like the Monopoly Man with monopoly money spilling out of their pockets, as simple as wearing a pig mask or a top hat, or just putting on a big white mustache and red bowtie made out of paper. In case you don't remember, here's a picture of the Monopoly Man:

Each "insurance executive" walks around introducing him/herself to passersby. Also, he/she hands out the following letter. This letter is on the reverse of a flyer urging people to remove the Middle Man standing between themselves and their health care providers.

Dear Person,

I'm a greedy CEO of an American Health Insurance Company and I'm very unhappy about some things I've been hearing lately. It seems that a lot of Americans want to get rid of private insurance companies and replace them with a government financed insurance company called single payer.

I thought you'd like to hear my take on this terrible idea.

They say that private insurance companies only care about making profits. Well, we are corporations, aren't we? That's what we're supposed to do. And what's this about how we don't provide any health services. Who in his right mind would want to see an insurance executive when he was sick?

Another thing, these single payer supporters need to get over the fact that insurance companies keep 25% to 30% of premiums for themselves. How do they think we pay for all the advertising we have to do? Our shareholders demand higher returns on their investments. More to the point, how am I supposed to get paid otherwise?

These people need to get rid of the idea that insurance company executives are paid too much money. Do you have any idea how much it costs to live in my neighborhood? My home alone was \$10 million and in your circumstances you probably can't even imagine how much I've had to spend to make it livable -- landscapers, painters, furnishings, drapes, appliances.... It goes on and on.

Yes, it is true that your premiums and co-payments keep increasing but have you ever stopped to think that my costs keep going up too? I'll bet you have kids, don't you? So do I, and don't you agree that they are one expensive proposition? I don't have to tell you how high tuition is in these private schools, and the clothes -- Oh, my god, for what I pay for kids' clothes every month I could hire another assistant.

Believe me, I feel bad for those 7 million Californians who don't have health insurance. But it's not my fault they can't pay. If you're so upset about it why aren't you telling Congress that you want your taxes to pay for it? We'll give anybody insurance if we just get the money.

My advice to you is to tell your legislators to leave things the way they are and just raise your taxes to keep things that way. After all, if it's good for America's Health Insurance Companies, it must be good for America!

Sincerely,

Your Greedy Health Insurance Executive