

June 2, 2008

Letters to the Editor  
The Daily Star  
102 Chestnut Street  
Oneonta, NY 13820

To the Editor:

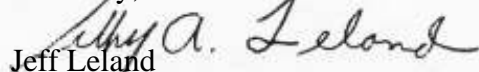
Last week's forum on health care, and The Daily Star's coverage of the event, did not include the perspective of employers. This is unfortunate since it is employers who largely pay for health insurance coverage — for both their employees and New York's uninsured.

Mr. Barber is quoted saying, "We need quality, affordable universal health care." While the Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care agrees, he and your readers should be made aware that it is government actions, including an overwhelming number of mandated benefits and taxes on health insurance coverage, that make New York's health insurance more expensive and less affordable. The small business community pays higher health insurance premiums and also significantly underwrites the state's existing health care system through various taxes on our health premiums. The current tab amounts to more than \$2.6 billion in special fees, assessments and surcharges authorized by the Health Care Reform Act (HCRA).

Mr. Dunlea and Mr. Barber did not address how they would propose to pay for a single-payer health care system. No one believes that "administrative savings" alone would cover all the costs of a single-payer system, so a massive tax hike would likely be needed. Such a tax, however, is something New York can ill afford given the looming deficits already facing our state.

It is fair to have a debate on options to improve New York's health care system to ensure access to coverage for every resident. A debate, however, requires more than one point of view.

Sincerely,



Jeff Leland

Chair, Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care

*The Employer Alliance for Affordable Health Care is the largest single-issue grassroots business coalition in New York State - 3,400 small business owners and sole proprietors representing more than 200,000 working New Yorkers.*