

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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January 16, 2025

The Honorable James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Comer:

As the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform prepares for the 119th session of Congress, I would like to request the Committee hold a hearing to examine commercial health insurance conglomerates engaged in limiting and denying their enrollees access to medically appropriate health care services. This is a matter of great interest and importance to all our constituents for which I believe the Committee's engagement is necessary and appropriate.

A recent incident that garnered significant public outcry came as a health insurance company announced limits to coverage for their enrollees' anesthesia care. Under the policy, claims submitted with reported time above the company's established number of minutes would be denied. If a patient's surgical procedure extended beyond these arbitrary time limits because of a complication or patient need, the company would not cover the additional anesthesia. This policy was suspended following significant backlash from patients, the public, and health care professionals.¹

This unprecedented policy is only the most recent example of alarming health care company behavior. Whether it is prior authorization, step therapy ("fail first"), or onerous payment policies, our constituents and the health care professionals who care for them are angered and frustrated by the policies and practices of commercial health insurance companies that limit, delay, and deny access to needed care.² Patients—our constituents—are concerned that they may be denied access to needed health care services because of insurers' focus on profits over patient care.

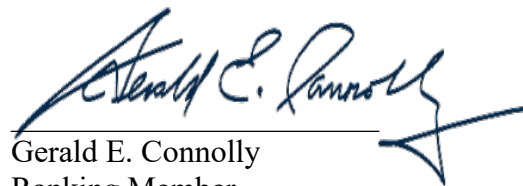
¹ *Insurer Anthem Rescinds Anesthesia Policy Change After Backlash*, U.S. News (Dec. 6, 2024) (online at www.usnews.com/news/health-news/articles/2024-12-06/insurer-anthem-rescinds-anesthesia-policy-change-after-backlash).

² KFF, *KFF Survey Shows Complexity, Red Tape, Denials, Confusion Rivals Affordability as a Problem for Insured Consumers, With Some Saying It Caused Them to Go Without or Delay Care* (June 15, 2023) (online at www.kff.org/mental-health/press-release/kff-survey-shows-complexity-red-tape-denials-confusion-rivals-affordability-as-a-problem-for-insured-consumers-with-some-saying-it-caused-them-to-go-without-or-delay-care/).

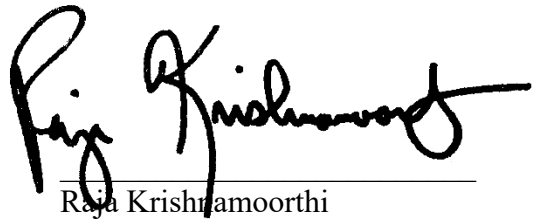
Congress should question whether we can continue to count on health insurance conglomerates to police themselves and their policies. An oversight hearing would allow our Committee to fully explore this question. Immediate action is necessary to hold insurance companies accountable.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Gerald E. Connolly", with a stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Raja Krishnamoorthi", with a horizontal line drawn underneath the signature.

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress