


If you don't regularly receive my reports, request a free subscription at [steve\\_bakke@comcast.net](mailto:steve_bakke@comcast.net)!  
Follow me on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BakkeSteve> and receive links to my posts and more!

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC"**  
**HEALTHCARE IN THE U.S.:**  
**BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU**  
**PROCLAIM AND WHAT**  
**YOU WISH FOR!**



By Stephen L. Bakke  March 6, 2016

*Here's what provoked me:*

*A writer claiming expertise was provided a "Guest Opinion" column as a podium to proclaim his disgust with our current healthcare system and then wish for a single payer system to solve many economic problems and lower healthcare costs by at least 50%. This is the type of inaccurate punditry and soundbite exploitation that keeps us from improving many areas of policy in our country.*

*Here's my response:*

**Healthcare in the U.S.: Be Careful What You Proclaim and What You Wish for!**

Roy Meidinger blames many of America's problems on our expensive and low quality healthcare system ("American healthcare stands apart, but not in a good way," Guest Opinion on March 5). He concludes that a single payer system would solve many problems and lower healthcare costs to at least ½ of present levels. I have too little space to analyze his questionable statistics and confused statements re: the current payment and insurance systems.

I will clarify only a few things:

- Meidinger states that our healthcare system has the lowest quality among 34 industrial countries. This claim is based on studies by the World Health Organization and The Commonwealth Fund which guaranteed low ratings if a country had no "universal" coverage.
- These studies admitted to excluding examination of medical records to determine "outcomes" – a critical quality measurement.
- Readers should refer to real quality comparisons at the National Center for Policy Analysis website.
- He claims that annually, 1,000,000 personal bankruptcies are caused by healthcare costs. A study of bankruptcies showed that unpaid healthcare bills were listed on a majority of bankruptcy filings, but most of those amounts were too small to matter.

Effectively lowering healthcare costs presumes using accurate facts and relevant assumptions.