

# An Open Letter from America's Physicians

Dear Fellow Americans,

For decades the United States has led the world in healthcare. We have enjoyed the finest hospitals, medical schools, research, technology, and resources. Unfortunately, our healthcare system has lost focus to the point where patient well-being is placed after politics, profits, and special interests. Healthcare costs are on the rise and patients have lost their freedom of choice. These trends are hurting our economy and compromising the doctor-patient relationship. As a result, it has become difficult for physicians to deliver the best possible care.

Our heavily fragmented healthcare system has made it very difficult for you, the American public, to get the care you need. As your physicians, we want to partner with you to address the critical defects of the system as outlined below:

- You are paying a lot for healthcare and not receiving enough in return. Your insurance premiums continue to increase while your healthcare options are dwindling. Gatekeepers, insurance networks, and restrictive regulations limit your choice of doctors and your access to care.
- You have been made dependent on complicated and expensive health insurance plans. Employers are forced to take money out of your paycheck to purchase health coverage. If you lose your job, you are left with no safety net and the money you have paid for health coverage vanishes.
- The time you spend with your physician has become remarkably brief due to regulatory hurdles requiring doctors to spend more time on documentation than with you.

We believe the following factors have made our current healthcare system unsustainable:

- The insurance industry's undue authority and oppressive control over healthcare processes
- Excessive and misguided government regulation
- The practice of defensive medicine in response to a harmful and costly legal environment

We, the physicians of the United States, will no longer remain silent. We will not tolerate a healthcare system where those without medical expertise or genuine interest in our patients' health have absolute control. This letter is merely a summary of the most important problems in our current system. We believe that by partnering with the public we can start to demand real change and formulate practical solutions.

We invite you, our patients, friends, neighbors, and employers to unite with us at this important time in the history of healthcare in the United States. Together, we can guarantee our nation a healthier tomorrow.

Please talk to your doctor about this letter and visit <http://www.sermo.com/DoctorsUnite> for more information.

Respectfully,

The Undersigned U.S. Physicians