



October 23, 2023

Josh Hawley  
400 E. 9th Street, Suite 9350  
Kansas City, MO 64106

Dear Senator Hawley,

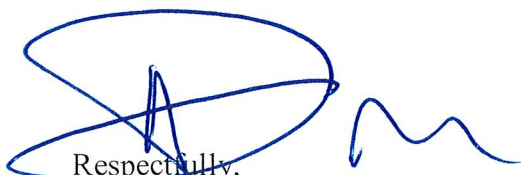
I am in receipt of your September 12<sup>th</sup> letter in response to my perspective on Medicare Advantage. Please note that my frame of reference is based on conservative values per the conservative philosophy of Senator Barry Goldwater, and in my mid-years per the conservative philosophy of President Ronald Reagan. Their belief of life, liberty, and happiness has always been a priority for me and my leadership style as Hospital Administrator for over 40 years with 32 years currently at Cameron Regional Medical Center. I believe my experience and perspective of rural hospital, financial operations, and third-party payers is more valid and justified in comparison to a Medicare Advantage lobbyist.

The American hospital inflation factor of expenses is over 15% due to labor cost associated with major shortages of doctors, nurses, and ancillary professions, while the American hospital continues to be sequestered with an automatic, 2% reduction of payment per reimbursement check/wire dispersed from Government Medicare and Medicare Advantage plans. In addition, there have been major federal reimbursement reductions in the Medicaid program due to significant federal reimbursement cuts in the disproportionate share uncompensated care program. The main issue is the continual over funding of support for the Medicare Advantage programs, which reimburses insurance companies by the federal government to manage the care of senior citizens instead of hospital and providers. All insurance company owned Medicare Advantage plans mandate pre-certification of most services and diagnostic tests ordered by the Provider, including a CT exam for a senior citizen who has a neurological issue. This also includes post-rehab care which is not automatically approved and most times delayed by Medicare Advantage plans. Medicare Advantage plans do offer a less expensive price for their services to the senior citizens; however their pre-certification process delays the necessary care for the senior citizens which promote obstruction of necessary services. There have been many financial studies performed, including med PAC, the non-partisan legislative agency that advises lawmakers on Medicare financing. Med PAC has identified that. The federal government is paying significantly more for Medicare Advantage plans than Government Medicare plans, which reflects the Government Medicare plan is more cost-effective for the American taxpayer. Please note that the Government Medicare plan does not

mandate the pre-certification process for necessary diagnostic test and services for the senior citizen. Providers and hospitals manage the care for the senior citizen under Government Medicare, and not the insurance company who receives Medicare Advantage dollars per month to manage the care of the senior citizen.

In summary, American hospitals are set up to fail financially, with the combination of inflationary expenses and major reductions in reimbursement as identified in the paragraphs above for services provided by Providers and hospitals. It must be noted that Medicare Advantage plans reimburse hospitals less than Government Medicare services, in addition to sequestration. Cameron Regional Medical Center is reimbursed more for inmate care services than Medicare Advantage plan services. Government Medicare reimburses Cameron Regional Medical Center more than Medicare Advantage plans who delay and obstruct care for the senior citizen. It is amazing to me that the Federal government is funding the illegal immigration system over \$10 billion when they enter and remain in the United States, but can't fund properly the government reimbursement system for the American hospital, especially during post Covid inflation. The conservative values of Senator Barry Goldwater and President Ronald Reagan prioritized government funding for national defense and healthcare for the Government Medicare and Medicaid system to promote life, liberty and happiness for the United States.

This is my response to your September 12<sup>th</sup> letter which will continue to focus on the destruction of rural hospital and provider healthcare in Northwest Missouri due to the financial growth of the Medicare Advantage system. My mission is to prevent hospital/healthcare deserts in rural America and to promote life, liberty and happiness per the philosophy of my two favorite politicians. My old school conservative philosophy is direct verbal communication and letters, not social media and websites. With this current budget crisis, I would think the conservatives in Congress would defund the Medicare Advantage program so the taxpayer could pay less with Government Medicare and the senior citizen would receive appropriate health care as navigated by their Provider/Hospital and not an insurance company. Please see attached email that I received from a member of CRMC's Board who was a newspaper editor in Northwest Missouri and is in the Hall of Fame of the Missouri Press.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'A' followed by a wavy line.

Respectfully,  
Joseph F. Abrutz, Jr.  
Hospital Administrator

JOSH HAWLEY  
MISSOURI

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TELEPHONE: (202) 224-6154  
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# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2509

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September 12, 2023

Joseph Abrutz  
1600 East Evergreen Street  
Cameron, MO 64429-2400

Dear Joseph,

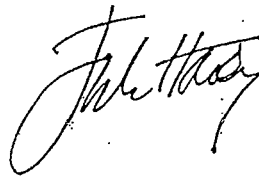
Thank you for contacting me about Medicare Advantage. I appreciate the time and effort you took to share your perspective with me on this important issue, and welcome the opportunity to respond.

I support Medicare Advantage and the protections and flexibilities it provides to our seniors. I also understand the financial pressures Americans face in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which is why lowering the cost of health care is a priority of mine. High health care costs devastate personal finances and are unsustainable for American seniors on fixed incomes. As your Senator, I am committed to alleviating these burdens by doing what I can to fix our broken health care system.

As you may know, on January 30, 2023, I sent a letter along with my colleagues to Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Administrator Chiquita Brooks-LaSure expressing support for Medicare Advantage. For plan year 2024, my colleagues and I encouraged CMS to implement policies that promote stability, increase oversight, and sustain and strengthen the program.

As always, I truly appreciate hearing your concerns. Please do not hesitate to contact me in the future on other issues important to you and your community. It is a privilege to be your voice in Congress. If you would like to get regular updates on my work in the Senate, please visit my website at [www.hawley.senate.gov](http://www.hawley.senate.gov) or follow me on social media at [@SenHawleyPress](https://twitter.com/SenHawleyPress).

Sincerely,



Josh Hawley  
United States Senator

Post by Ady Barkan on X

steve tinnen <stevetinnen@yahoo.com>

Wed 10/11/2023 11:50 AM

To: Carol Arthur <CArthur@cameronregional.org>;

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

**Ady Barkan**  
@AdyBarkan

Megan's dad should have been able to go to a long-term care rehab facility after surgery, just as his neurosurgeon recommended.

His Medicare (Dis)Advantage, with no regard for his well-being, denied him the care he needed.

[pic.twitter.com/rzSs0rfyAX](https://pic.twitter.com/rzSs0rfyAX)

9/21/23, 11:50 AM

Sent from my iPhone

Disclaimer: This message contains privileged and confidential information intended for the use of the addressee only. If you are not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any disclosure, copying or distribution is strictly prohibited.



Convention

## Missouri Press Hall of Fame

## Missouri Newspaper Hall of Fame

Missouri Press Association Newspaper Hall of Fame inductees are selected annually from nominations received by the MPA Newspaper Hall of Fame Committee. Click here to download a copy of the nomination form.

To be considered for induction into the Newspaper Hall of Fame, a person must have made exemplary contributions to the newspaper industry over a number of years, lived honorably, influenced unselfishly, thought soundly and displayed community involvement. MPA founded the Hall of Fame in 1991 and past inductees include Joseph Pulitzer, Walter Williams, Samuel Clemens, and many more listed below.

Those inducted into the Missouri Newspaper Hall of Fame receive Pinnacle Awards. Plaques noting their accomplishments are hung in the William A. Bray Conference Room at the Missouri Press building in Columbia. Plaques of the honorees are also on display in Lee Hills Hall at the Missouri School of Journalism in Columbia.

### MPA Newspaper Hall of Fame Members

#### Inducted 2023

Terez Paylor, *The Kansas City Star*  
Eugene Webster Sharp, University of Missouri School of Journalism  
Jane See White, *The Associated Press*  
Dr. Donald Suggs, *The St. Louis American*  
Dan Wehmer, *Webster County Citizen, Seymour*

#### Inducted 2022

Jon K. Rust, *Rust Communications*  
Dana Raker, *Holden Image*  
Joe Gravely, *Bolivar Free Press*

#### Inducted 2021

Alan Turley, *The Van Buren Current Local*  
Jack "Miles" Ventimiglia, *The Richmond News, The Excelsior Springs Standard*  
Steve Tinner, *The Plattsburg Clinton County Leader*

#### Inducted 2020

Laura Rollins Hockaday, *The Kansas City Star*  
Kia Breaux, *The Associated Press*  
Dane Vernon, *The Advertiser, Eldon*

#### Inducted 2019

Carol Stark, *Joplin Globe*  
Phil and Kathy Conger, *Bethany Republican-Clipper*  
Thomas Benton White, *Benton County Enterprise*  
Francis Stufflebam, *Bolivar Herald*

#### Inducted 2018

Wendell Redden, *Joplin Globe*  
Kent Ford, *Missouri Press Association*  
Joe May, *Mexico Ledger*  
Jim Robertson, *Columbia Daily Tribune*

#### Inducted 2017

Arthur Aull, *Lamar Democrat*  
Kenneth C. Moulton, *The Monett Times*