



'Bought & Bossed?' Why Lawmakers Keep Dropping the Ball on Single Payer

Featuring Paul Y. Song, M.D.

IN THIS EPISODE

Does the path to winning single payer in the U.S. lie in the states, or in Congress? Would states that rejected the Medicaid expansion accept federal Medicare for All? Join guest **Dr. Paul Y. Song**, radiation oncologist, president of Physicians for a National Health Program - California and host **Brenda Gazzar** for a rundown of states' efforts to pass single-payer healthcare. What's behind their failure to win? And what can we do about legislators who care more about special interests than about people?

SHOW NOTES

WE DISCUSS

What edge does California have when it comes to health care?

“...take California, which on any given day is the fifth or sixth largest economy in the world, nearly 40 million people, it's several countries onto itself. And I think if you were ... able to give California the ability to do so, that's a whole other ballgame. When you take 40 million people and you basically use that negotiating power, you can get steep discounts and drugs and services.” – *Paul Song, MD*

What happened with the New York Health Act?

“...despite the fact that they quote have a “Democratic majority,” you had some unions working behind the scenes, as well as some politicians that were really beholden to the insurance industry that all fought back on it. So that was the biggest reason and again, you know, everyone thinks labor is all for single payer, but the problem is some unions get better health benefits than others and they're worried about watering down the benefits that they fought so hard for.” – *Paul Song, MD*

What would you like us to know?

“I would just say that for people listening, it's easy to get discouraged. Perhaps many of you are going through really difficult times right now, health-related problems and running into real financial hardship as a result of that and you feel like nobody's listening to you, but I think this is the time that we have to fight even harder to educate, get our family, coworkers, neighbors really engaged about what we're doing because unless we really let people really know what the solution is, we're still going to remain numb and just continue to be beaten down by a system that doesn't care about us.” – *Paul Song, MD*

Helpful Links

[The birth of Medicare: From Saskatchewan's breakthrough to Canada-wide coverage.](#) Canadian Dimension

[What Vermont learned when it tried \(and failed\) to launch a single-payer health system.](#) Advisory

[Gottfried on 'laying the groundwork' for future passage of NY Health Act.](#) Spectrum News 1

[CalCare, AB 1400](#), Guaranteed Health Care for All Act, 2021-2022 Session

[SB 562, The Healthy California Act](#), 2017-2018 Session, California Legislature

[Unmasked: Doctors' association execs joined Newsom at lobbyist's birthday bash](#). CalMatters

Episode Transcript

Read the [full episode transcript](#).

Guest Biography

[Paul Song, MD](#)

President, Physicians for a National Health Program - California.

Get Involved / Take Action

[Join Physicians for a National Health Program](#) (PNHP) *to support a national campaign to improve and expand Medicare to all residents of the U.S.*

[Join the CalCare Campaign](#) (National Nurses United) *to join the fight for single payer and AB1400, the Guaranteed Health Care for All Act*

[Subscribe to HEAL California](#) *for health policy news with a California focus*

[Join Healthy California Now](#) *- a coalition working toward a California single-payer system. Individual and organizational membership available.*

[Join Health Care for All California](#) *to keep up with local actions to support California single-payer health care.*