



**Minnesota's taking on
corporate health care --
and winning!**

Featuring Rose Roach

THIS TIME ON CODE WACK!

How is Minnesota on the front lines of healthcare reform? ***What gains has the state legislature made when it comes to busting dangerous corporate healthcare mergers and moving closer to Medicare for All?***

To find out, we spoke to **Rose Roach**, chair of [Healthcare for All Minnesota](#) and national coordinator for the [Labor Campaign for Single Payer](#). She recently retired as the executive director of the Minnesota Nurses Association.

SHOW NOTES

WE DISCUSS

Can you talk about how Minnesota recently staved off a merger between two major healthcare systems, Fairview and Sanford Health?

"...this [proposed merger] really brought up...concerns around antitrust and how huge these megamergers are happening and the impact of them not even just to patient care, but even to workers and workers' wages and the community overall.

"So I think all of this really kind of came together, in addition to a really, really important piece of legislation that our legislature passed ... in this 2023 session that I think made these CEOs a little bit nervous when it came to actually being able to follow through.

"Because this legislation ... 'gave Attorney General Keith Ellison, his office, the power to investigate proposed mergers.'" – **Rose Roach**

What healthcare access obstacles are there in Minnesota today?

"Well, it's no different than any place. I mentioned healthcare deserts. That certainly is happening because we've corporatized health care. As I said, taking mother/baby units away from small critical access hospitals in rural Minnesota, which is happening in rural communities, right, all across this country.

"So women are driving 50 miles in snowstorms in labor to deliver babies safely. I mean it's just insanity 'cause again all of that is based on, 'well that's

*not profitable for us in that particular area or community.’ That’s not how we should do a healthcare system. Right? It has to be based on the health needs of the community and the people.” - **Rose Roach***

Tell us about the proposed [Minnesota Health Plan](#). What is it and why does it matter to everyday Minnesotans?

“It covers everything. It doesn’t say that your teeth and your eyes and your ears and your brain are somehow not attached to your body. [It] actually covers all medical needs, including long-term care...

“...we take care of Medicaid. It improves reimbursement rates for providers...everybody is in-network in this [plan] because it’s literally the plan for the state.

“And it would guarantee health care for all...based on an income-type basis. And so we will all be paying for it, but we’ll be paying for it according to what we can afford. ***And then we will have affordable, accessible health care for all.***” – **Rose Roach**

Helpful Links

[Fairview, Sanford call off health systems merger](#), [MPR News](#)

[How Minnesota lawmakers helped stop a harmful hospital merger](#), [Minnesota Reformer](#)

[Minnesota’s rural health care: There is still no 911 to call](#), [Perkins Consulting, Center for Rural Policy & Development](#)

[Minnesota Health Plan, MNHealthPlan.org](#)

[Jayapal, Dingell, Sanders Introduce Medicare for All Act of 2023, Pramila Jayapal](#)

Episode Transcript

Read the full [episode transcript](#).

Biography: Rose Roach

Rose Roach is the National Coordinator for the [Labor Campaign for Single Payer](#) and serves as Chair of [Healthcare for All Minnesota](#). She recently retired as the Executive Director of the MN Nurses Association, MNA, after 34 years in the labor movement having represented public school employees in both MN, her home state, and CA before being hired at MNA in 2014.

For two decades, Rose has been involved in the healthcare justice movement, as a trainer and national speaker while working with elected officials to craft legislation that moves us to a patient/provider centered healthcare system.

Rose was recognized by the MN Physician's Magazine as one of their quadrennials, top 100 leaders in healthcare in 2016 and 2020. Rose has served on former MN Governor Mark Dayton's Healthcare Financing Task Force as well as MN's Attorney General, Keith Ellison's, Lowering Pharmaceutical Costs Task Force.

Recently she received the Women's Trailblazer Award from Congresswoman Ilhan Omar and was the 2019 recipient of the MN Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party's Paul Wellstone Lifetime Commitment to Organized Labor Award.

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