

Our healthcare system's hurting us. Why are lawmakers complicit?

featuring
Rebecca Wood



This time on Code WACK!

Why do lawmakers continue to ignore the toll our broken healthcare system takes on us? ***And what can we do, ourselves, to bring about change?*** What inspired single-payer advocate and mother **Rebecca Wood** to put much of her activism on hold to “*sharpen her swords*”?

To find out, we interviewed Rebecca, a first-year law student and public interest fellow at the University of Massachusetts. She’s a 2024 [Rappaport Fellow in Law and Public Policy](#) and the president of the University of Massachusetts Law [National Lawyers Guild](#) chapter. *This is the second episode in a two-part series with Rebecca.*

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WE DISCUSS

After sharing your personal healthcare story before the congressional committee, how did you feel?

"...the biggest heartbreak for me is that elected officials know that stuff like this happens and it's not worth it to them to change it.

"Like we haven't reached the point to where it is worth it to them to address this, to work on this to say '*not again*,' and that to me is heartbreaking.

"So I don't know what the answer is right now, but it's definitely something I think about regularly." – **Rebecca Wood**

What do you think is keeping lawmakers from fixing the conditions that caused you - and continue to cause so many other Americans - such pain?

"One thing I've learned in politics is '*follow the money*.'

"See who funds who, who's their contributors, who gives to who and if they go dark money, there's a reason why they're going dark money. . . "

–**Rebecca Wood**

What do you think it will take to win single payer both in Massachusetts and in the nation?

"That's such a tough question, because we can sit here and plot and plan but all it takes is one simple moment to just get the ball rolling and to push

through with that momentum and where that moment comes, it's impossible to say or predict.

"So I think it's a matter of continuous organizing, waiting for that moment and pouncing on it when it happens ...

"... in addition to organizing, keeping it fresh on people's minds, keeping people educated so when that moment comes, we can pounce.- **Rebecca Wood**

Helpful Links

Video: [Rebecca Wood - Sanders Single-Payer Healthcare Press Conference](#), *C-Span*

Video: [Hearing: Pathways to Universal Coverage](#), *Ways & Means Committee*

[The Revolving Door In Health Care Regulation](#), *Health Affairs*

[Regulatory Capture Definition With Examples](#), *Investopedia*

[Lobbyist Documents Reveal Health Care Industry Battle Plan Against "Medicare for All"](#), *The Intercept*

[What Is Health Law - And Why Does it Matter?](#), *American Public University*

[Congress must listen to working families and overhaul healthcare. minimum wage and education \[Bernie Sanders\]](#). *The Guardian*

Episode Transcript

Read the [episode transcript](#).

Guest Biography - Rebecca Wood

Rebecca Wood lived all over Virginia before relocating to Massachusetts. She graduated from James Madison University and served in Americorps with Virginia State Parks.

Her plans for graduate school were put on hold indefinitely when her daughter, Charlie, was delivered ten hours into her twenty sixth week of gestation. Early on, Rebecca learned she'd have to advocate for her daughter's well-being, whether with hospitals, insurance companies, or social services. In time, she expanded her advocacy efforts into the policy arena.

Ms. Wood's initial civic participation was as a volunteer and, later, a Team Leader with the nonpartisan voter registration organization, HeadCount. However, her first time on Capitol Hill and her active engagement began in January of 2017 when she stepped up to join the fight to save the Affordable Care Act and Medicaid. Since then, Rebecca has worked with many organizations and offices on Capitol Hill.

Her healthcare work includes rallies, protests, press conferences, lobbying, and conventions. Most notably, she told her and Charlie's story at the introduction of Senator Sanders' Medicare For All Act of 2017 and testified before the House Ways and Means Committee hearing on Pathways to Universal Coverage in June 2019.

Rebecca was recognized for her effective advocacy in 2017 by The ARC of Virginia as a Catalyst For Change and was the 2019 R. Ann Meyers Distinguished Social Work Alumni Award recipient. Currently, Ms. Wood is a 1L Public Interest Law Fellow at the University of Massachusetts School of Law. She is a 2024 Rappaport Fellow in Law and Public Policy and the president of the UMass Law NLG chapter.

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