



Letters: Save poor children and funds with preventive health care

Kudos to Free Press columnist Rochelle Riley for her passion and commitment to improving the lives of the next generation of Michiganders, our children. I thank her for her Dec. 16 column ("Missing issue from GOP debates: Children"), but I fear she misunderstood my comments about the Medicaid program that provides health insurance for tens of thousands of poor children in Michigan.

What I tried to say was that Michigan could save up to \$500 million a year if we could lower hospitalization rates for children on Medicaid to the same rates as for children who are on private health insurance programs.

The problem is that parents of children on Medicaid do not have consistent access to preventive care from pediatricians and often rely on expensive visits to hospital emergency rooms when a child with a chronic condition like asthma is suffering. Emergency room visits are enormously expensive for taxpayers and not an efficient way to provide health services to poor children.

The Children's **HealthCare** Access Programs in Kent County and Wayne County

provide a road map for communities to create medical homes for poor children so that they get the preventive care kids need and their parents know where to go for that care.

Providing better access to high quality preventive health care for poor children and their families not only allows children to thrive and increases their odds of success, but it also saves precious tax dollars -- a win-win if I ever saw one.

Jack Kresnak

President-CEO, Michigan's Children

Government failure

Congress has confirmed that this government of the people, by the people and for the people has finally perished. I don't recognize what passes for government these days, and I don't like it.

Lou Preiditsch

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