



Send the health care bill to Nevadans

Economic officials and business executives often express bewilderment at the lack of fawning gratitude they think they're owed from progressives for their zealous work to improve the local economy on our behalf. If only we weren't so negative and ignorant about the necessity for economic growth, surely we would see how their efforts have "saved" our community from becoming a stagnant wasteland void of opportunity.

Lately, their righteous superiority has taken an uglier turn towards entitled anger. A recent public forum sponsored by the Nevada Independent featured a panel of pro-growth developers and apologists with nary a voice of caution to articulate the reality of long-term residents already priced out of their housing or highway traffic regularly backed up for miles. These gentlemen proceeded to build upon each other's bravado, blaming their inability to move more quickly to develop more projects on local politicians who don't know how to get out of their own way. Like an adult wagging a finger at a spoiled child, they instructed

officials to "Be a solution. Don't be a problem. And don't stop growth."

They made it clear they don't want California-style environmental regulations. Instead, they want our political leaders to let them plunge forward with their "epic" (and secret) development plans. They want local governments to focus on solving the affordable housing problem and maintaining the region's quality of life, like hiking trails and our pristine mountain environment. But forget about holding developers accountable for impacts their epic growth might cause because growth is good! It's everything! If we don't support them, they might go somewhere else where they're more appreciated.

Now comes the news that many of the companies awarded millions in taxpayer subsidies to bring in new employees who clog our roads, crowd our schools and burden our infrastructure, are even deeper in the corporate welfare trough than we thought. Thousands of their employees qualify for health care through Medicaid, costing taxpayers millions more for these

new, supposedly high-wage jobs we already subsidize through tax abatements.

The analysis by the Nevada Independent discovered "more than 60 businesses given tax incentives by the state over the last four fiscal years had about 13,000 employees—and their dependents—enrolled in Medicaid in 2018, with the government spending upwards of \$34.5 million to care for them."

Many of the companies whose employees we subsidize are familiar names like Amazon. And, of course, the greediest business of all, Tesla, was ranked as the company with the 13th highest number of employees on Medicaid. The Independent reminds us that Tesla "received a record-breaking \$1.25 billion mix of tax incentives, abatements and credits from the state in 2014." Why on Earth can't they pay for the cost of health care for their 426 employees and 439 dependents on Medicaid?

Taxpayers have paid for workers' health care at mega-corporations for decades. Although Walmart has not received any recent tax abatements, the article points out

that "Walmart has the most workers and dependents on Medicaid in Nevada—6,464 in total—which cost the state \$18.6 million in 2018." And we wonder why these corporations are so opposed to single-payer health care. When taxpayers pick up the cost of health care for their employees, profits increase and stockholders are happier.

The same businesses that love to lecture government officials about getting out of their way are not the least bit shy of taking advantage of every government subsidy program they can find, lacking complete self-awareness of their avarice or lack of humility. It's their due, you see, for deigning to bring their business to Nevada. If Nevadans don't support them with subsidies and appreciation, wait for it—they might leave and take their business elsewhere.

We should be so lucky. Just pay us back first. □

To read the Nevada Independent article referenced here, go to <https://bit.ly/2HuKulf>

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