Man arrested in wife's disappearance

NEWS, 8A

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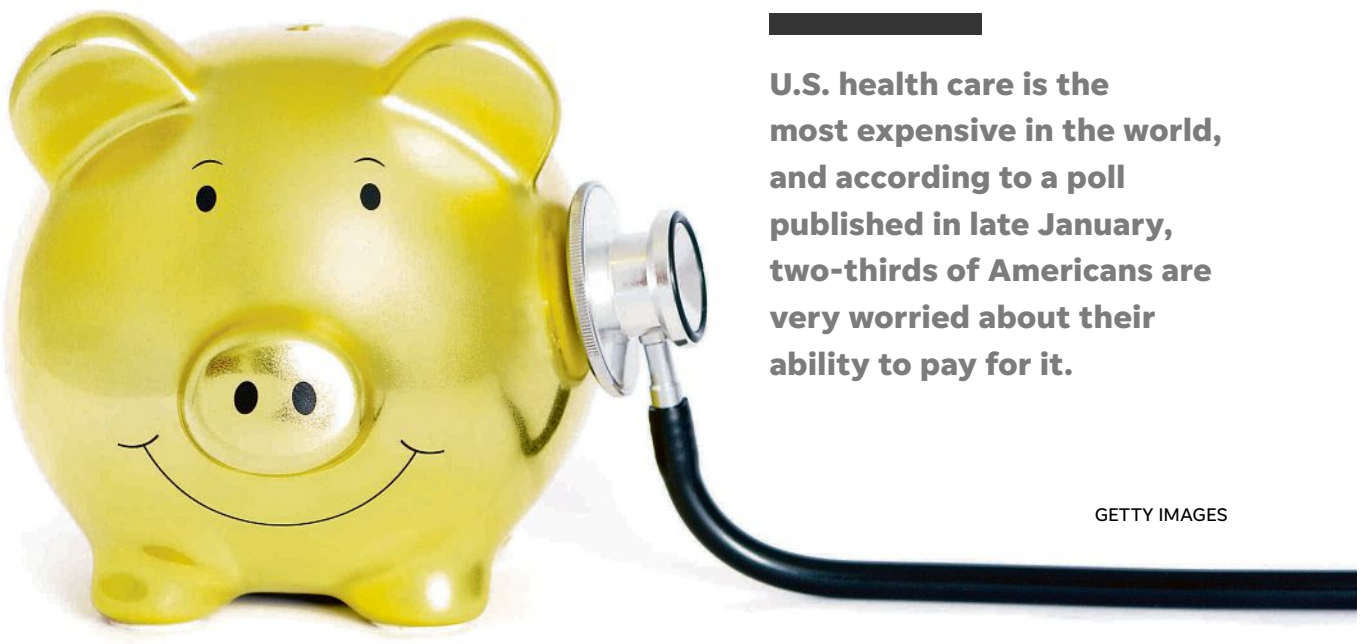
ANALYSIS

The high cost of U.S. health care



U.S. health care is the most expensive in the world, and according to a poll published in late January, two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their ability to pay for it.

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Complex system, competing interests barriers to lower prices

Patrick Aguilar Washington University in St. Louis | THE CONVERSATION

In announcing its "Great Healthcare Plan" in January, the Trump administration became the latest in a long history of efforts by the U.S. government to rein in the soaring cost of health care. • As a physician and professor studying the intersection of business and health, I know that the challenges in reforming the sprawling U.S. health care system are immense. That's partly for political and even philosophical reasons.

But it also reflects a complex system fraught with competing interests – and the fact that patients, hospitals, health insurance companies and drug manufacturers change their behaviors in conflicting ways when faced with new rules.

Soaring costs

U.S. health care is the most expensive in the world, and according to a poll published in late January, two-thirds of Americans are very worried about their ability to pay for it – whether it's their medications, a doctor's visit, health insurance or an unpredictably costly medical emergency.

Disputes over health policy even played a central role in the federal government shutdown in fall 2025.

Trump's health care framework outlines no specific policy actions, but it does establish priorities to address a number of longtime concerns, including prescription drug costs, price transparency, lowering insurance premiums and making health insurance companies generally more accountable.

Why have these challenges been so difficult to address?

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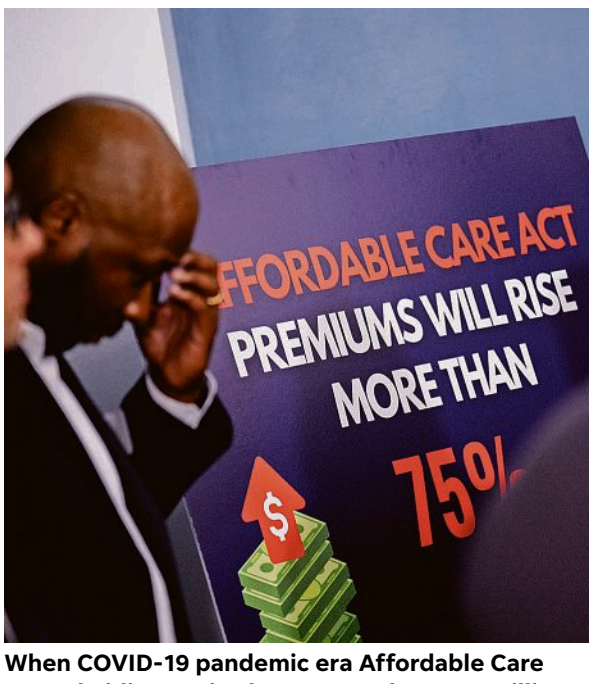

When COVID-19 pandemic era Affordable Care Act subsidies expired on Jan. 1, about 1.4 million people dropped coverage, and for most who didn't, premiums more than doubled.

ANDREW HARNIK/GETTY IMAGES

IN BRIEF

DMV delay, spring travel option

Steve Pastis
Visalia Times-Delta
USA TODAY NETWORK

U.S. Forest Service closes 57 offices

The U.S. Forest Service is closing 57 field offices, including the office in Fresno.

"The Forest Service is implementing a sweeping restructuring to move leadership and decision making closer to the forests and communities it serves," explained the USFS in a two-page announcement.

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Visalia's Giddings Street reopens

Steve Pastis
Visalia Times-Delta
USA TODAY NETWORK

Giddings Street in Visalia is now open for through traffic, even as the Mill Creek Culvert Replacement Project construction continues.

"Crews are pushing ahead on the Mill Creek Culvert Project after multiple rain and supply chain delays," Visalia Assistant Engineer Bryce Nagel said. "The public can now travel down Giddings Street, as the project is close to being fully finished."

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